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Leprosy In Ancient And Early Medieval Times

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE FRANKS

by

Harold S. Snellgrove

Introduction

The early history of leprosy is rather difficult to follow. The Old Testament contains numerous references to the disease, but modern medical historians have proved that the Biblical terminology was used for a number of skin diseases.¹ In addition to Biblical writers, other ancient authors used the word *lepra* to include such diseases as psoriasis, eczema, and various skin disorders, -- possibly even syphilis²

Leprosy today, however, appears to be more analagous to what the ancient world called *elephantiasis*. Although Arturo Castiglioni suggests that "Constantine the African (11th century) seems to have been the first writer to give to leprosy its specific connotation,"³ Scribonius Largus, physician to Emperor Claudius, indicated that during his day the words *lepra* and *elephantiasis* were being used synonymously.⁴

Leprosy appears to have been present in Egypt and the ancient Near East from early times. That it existed in Persia around the seventh century B.C. is evident from the writings of the Greek historian, Herodotus, who claimed:

If a Persian has the leprosy he is not allowed to enter a city, or to have any dealings with the other Persians; he must, they say, have sinned against the sun. Foreigners attacked by this disorder are forced to leave the country: . . .⁵

Harold S. Snellgrove, who is Associate Professor of History at Mississippi State College, is engaged in a study of French Medieval Leper Houses. This is the introductory chapter.

¹Isadore Duer, "Leprosy" in William Osler and Thomas McCrae, *Modern Medicine, Its Theory and Practice*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia, 1907), III, 121. For a detailed study of Biblical leprosy, see George Henry Fox, "Biblical and Modern Leprosy" in *Popular Science Monthly*, XXIV (November, 1883-April, 1884), 797-800 and E. L. McEwen, "The Leprosy of the Bible in its Medical Aspect" in *Biblical World*, XXX (1911), 194-202.

²Arturo Castiglioni, *A History of Medicine*, trans. by E. G. Krumbhaar (New York, 1941), p. 73.

³*Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴Scribonius Largus, *Compositiones*, ed. by George Helmreich (Leipzig, 1887), p. 97. 'Hoc etiam lepram et quam elephantiam dicunt sanat....'

⁵George Rawlinson, trans., *The History of Herodotus*, 3 vols. (New York, 1859), I, 215.

That the disease was prevalent in ancient Mesopotamia is apparent from the stone landmarks excavated there,⁶ and that it was to be found in Palestine is gained from Biblical references, uncritical though some of them may be.⁷

Mantheo, an Egyptian historian of about 300 B.C. stated that at the time of the great exodus there were eighty thousand Hebrews afflicted with *lepra* in Egypt.⁸ The Latin poet, Lucretius, writing in the first century B.C., called attention to the "elephant disease which is found by the river Nile in mid-Egypt and nowhere else."⁹ Oribasius, physician to Emperor Julian, in the fourth century A.D. wrote that "this sickness is especially well-known to the Egyptians," and that this disease struck not only common people but also kings.¹⁰ A modern medical historian, however, believes that the earliest Greek writers on medicine were unacquainted with Egyptian leprosy except by hearsay.¹¹

From the absence of references, it would appear that leprosy was practically unknown among the Greeks,¹² and the Roman writers on medicine were careful to point out that leprosy was an Egyptian disease, almost unknown in Italy. Celsus, who lived during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, noted that leprosy was hardly known in Italy;¹³ and Pliny the Elder, who lived about the same time, pointed out that leprosy was brought back to Italy by the army of Pompey the Great.¹⁴ Evidently the disease made little headway, for Oribasius, during the fourth century, observed that leprosy was still uncommon in Italy.¹⁵ Legend would have it, however, that during this same century Fausta, wife of Emperor Constantine, influenced her husband to idolatrous practices which caused him to become afflicted with leprosy.¹⁶

⁶James A. Tobey, *Riders of the Plagues* (New York, 1930), p.21. See also Henry E. Siegrist, *A History of Medicine*, in progress, Vol. I: Primitive and Archaic Medicine (New York, 1951), pp. 381,398.

⁷Among the Biblical references, attention may be called to Lev. xiii:46 and Num. v:1-4. Flavius Josephus, "Antiquities of the Jews" in *The Work of Flavius Josephus*, trans. by William Whitston, 2 vols. in one (Philadelphia, 1870), I, 311, comments of leprosy among the Jews. See also footnote 1 *supra*.

⁸E. L. McEwen, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

⁹Titus Lucretius Carus, *De Rerum Natura*, trans. by W. H. D. Rouse (Loeb Classical Library) (London, 1931), p. 522. The reference may be found in VI, 11:1114-1115.

¹⁰M. Bussemaker and Charles Daremberg, eds., *Oeuvres d'Oribase*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1876), VI, 197.

¹¹George Henry Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 800.

¹²Hippocrates and Galen have little to say of the disease. Cf. Cecelia C. Mettler, *History of Medicine*, ed. by Fred A. Mettler (Philadelphia, 1947), 613-615.

¹³Aulus Cornelius Celsus, *De Medicina*, trans. by W. G. Spencer, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1935), I, 342-345.

¹⁴Caius Plinius Secundus (Pliny the Elder), *Historia Naturalis XXXVII*, ed. by Gabriel Brotier, 6 vols. (Paris, 1779), Book xxvii, Chapter 5.

¹⁵Oribasius, *op. cit.*, VI, 197.

¹⁶Eusebius (of Caesarea), "Prologomena, Constantine the Great" in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. by P. Schaff and H. Wace, second series, 13 vols. (New York, 1890-1900), II, 150.

By the fifth century leprosy seems to have spread northward in Europe. B. M. Gould and W. L. Pyle believe that Gaul was invaded by leprosy about the second century A.D.¹⁷ F. H. Garrison concluded that leprosy began to spread into northern Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries.¹⁸ There is proof, however, that by the latter part of the fifth century leprosy had become established in Gaul. By 460 a leper house was functioning in Saint Oyen,¹⁹ and St. Severinus of Marseilles, who died around 488, is known to have shown mercy to lepers.²⁰

By the middle of the sixth century, the number of lepers in Gaul must have increased considerably; for a church council meeting at Orleans in November 549 passed the ruling that priests should minister to lepers and give them clothing.²¹ Thirty-four years later at Lyons a provincial council ordered that bishops should furnish food and clothing for lepers.²²

An interesting reference to leprosy among the Franks had to do with a certain leper who presented himself to a disciple of Saint Columbanus and who, after treatment, went away healed.²³ Other references to leprosy in the early Frankish state will be treated with respect to care, treatment, and legislation. Suffice it to say, however, that leprosy must have become widespread by the time of Pepin and Charlemagne, for both rulers issued regulations governing the conduct of lepers.²⁴

Early Descriptions of Leprosy

One of the earliest descriptions of leprosy or elephantiasis is found in the medical writings of Celsus, who wrote as follows:

The disease which the Greeks call elephantiasis whilst almost unknown in Italy, is of very frequent occurrence in certain regions; it is counted among chronic affec-

¹⁷B. M. Gould and W. L. Pyle, *Anomalies and Curiosities of Medicine* (Philadelphia, 1900), p. 911.

¹⁸F. H. Garrison, *An Introduction to the History of Medicine*, 3 vols. (New York, 1922), p. 170.

¹⁹Edward Ehlers, "Leproseries Danoises du Moyen-Age" in *Janus*, IV (1899), p. 191, citing Langebeck, ed., *Scripta rerum danicarum*, III, 568.

²⁰"vita S. Severini" in *Monumenta Germaniae historica, Auctores Antiquissimi*, I, 20.

²¹J. D. Mansi and others, eds., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, new edition, 53 vols. (Paris, 1901 ff), IX, 134.

²²Mansi, IX, 943.

²³"vita Columbani Abbatis Discipulorum que Eius Liber II" in *M.G.H., Scriptores Rerum Meroving.*, IV, 147.

²⁴See *infra*, pp.

tions; in this the whole body becomes so affected that even the bones are said to become diseased. The surface of the body presents a multiplicity of spots and of swellings, which, at first red, are gradually changed to be black in color. The skin is thickened and thinned in an irregular way, hardened and softened, roughened in some places with a kind of scales; the trunk wastes, the faces, calves and feet swell. When the disease is of long standing, the fingers and toes are sunk under the swelling: feverishness supervenes, which may easily destroy a patient overwhelmed by such troubles.²⁵

Cassius Felix, writing about 29 A. D., declared that elephantiasis was so called because of certain characteristics of the disease that were similar to the calloused bodies of elephants. He further asserted that the disease frequently caused the tips of the fingers to fall off, the voice to become uneven, the breath to give forth a bad odor, and the eruptions of rotten blood to be changed into a thickened quality.²⁶ Pliny the Elder observed that the disorder made its appearance in the form of a small pimple on the nose. From this the disease spread over the whole face, mouth, breast, and hands, -- covering them with foul eruptions.²⁷

Areteus of Cappadocia, a Greek physician who lived in Rome during the second half of the second century A. D., gave a lurid account of elephantiasis. Of this disease, he wrote as follows:

But the commencement of the disease gives no great indication of it; ... nor does it display itself upon the surface of the body, ... but lurking among the bowels, like a concealed fire it smolders there, and, having prevailed over the internal parts, it afterwards blazes forth on the surface, for the most part beginning, ... on the face, ... but in certain cases from the joint of the elbow, the knee, and knuckles of the hands and feet upon the increase of the affection, the respiration is fetid from the corruption within of the breath.... Urine thick, muddy, like that of cattle....

* * *

²⁵Celsus, *De Medicina*, pp. 342-345.

²⁶Cassius Felix, *De Medicina ex Graecis Logicae Sectae Auctoribus Liber Translatas Sub Artabure et Calepio Consulibus*, ed. by Valentin Rose (Leipzig, 1879), pp. 177-178.

²⁷Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis*, Book xxv, Chapter 2.

... Nose, with black protuberances, rugged; prominence of the lips thickened, but lower part livid; nose elongated; teeth not white indeed, but appearing to be so under a dark body; ears red, black, contracted, resembling the elephant...; ulcers upon the base of the ears...; shrivelled all over the body with rough wrinkles; but likewise deep fissures, like black furrows on the skin; and for this reason the disease has got the name *elephas*.

* * *

... Sometimes, too, certain of the members of the patient will drop off, such as the nose, the fingers, the feet, the privy parts, and the whole hands; for the ailment does not prove fatal, so as to relieve the patient from a foul life and dreadful sufferings, until he has been divided limb from limb...²⁸

Marcellus Empiricus, a fourth century medical writer, observed that elephantiasis first appeared on the face in the form of pustules of various and unequal size. At length they so increased that the bones, the fingers, and the limbs became affected.²⁹ Vegetius Renatus, noted that the signs of the disease were a burning itch on the back; hard scales, a fermenting of pustules in the nostrils, feet, and head; the decaying of the stomach; the development of a bitter cough; and a burning sensation in the mouth.³⁰ Prudentius in the same century stated that leprosy corrupted the body,³¹ and Oribasius noted that the disease usually began on the face and that the nerves and bones soon became diseased.³²

Saint Gregory of Nyssa, brother of Saint Basil, described leprosy in most horrible terms. "What words could describe," he said, "the unsightly disfigurement of sufferers from leprosy. Gradually over all their limbs and organs of sensation rottenness spreads and devours them."³³ He also observed that their bodies were covered with wounds, sores, and gaping cavities and that the odor from them was almost unendurable.³⁴

²⁸ Aretaeus of Cappadocia, *On the Causes and Symptoms of Chronic Diseases*, ii, 13, cited in Mettler, *History of Medicine*, pp. 243-244.

²⁹ Marcellus Empiricus, *De Medicamentis liber*, ed. by George Helmreich (Leipzig, 1889), *passim*.

³⁰ Vegetius Renatus, "Ars Veterinariae sive Mulomedicinae" in *Scriptores Rei Rusticae Veteres Latini*, 4 vols. (Bipontus, 1787), I, 236.

³¹ Aurelius Prudentius, *Opera Omnia*, 3 vols. (London, 1824), I, 191.

³² Oribasius, *Oeuvres*, VI, 197.

³³ Gregory of Nyssa, "On the Soul and the Resurrection" in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, VI, 462.

³⁴ Sister Mary Emily Keenan, "St. Gregory of Nazianzus and Early Byzantine Medicine" in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, IX (1941), pp. 17, 18.

Evidently by the latter part of the sixth century, the words *lepra* and *elephantiasis* were no longer being used interchangeably, for Saint Isidore of Seville described each separately in his *Etymologies*. "In leprosy," he says, "the skin is covered with a roughness similar to scales, whence it takes its name, whose color becomes black, then white, and then red. On the body of man, leprosy is so diagnosed if at various times a different color appears among the well parts of the skin, or if it is so diffused everywhere that it makes the whole of the same defiled color."³⁵ Elephantiasis, he states, "is called a sickness from its similarity to elephants, whose hardness and toughness of skin naturally gives the name to the sickness in men, because it makes the surface of the body similar to the skin of elephants, or because the great suffering brings forth the name."³⁶

Cures and Treatment

Cures suggested by the ancient writers are interesting. Celsus suggested the following:

At once, therefore, at the commencement, he should be bled for two days, or the bowels loosened by a black hellibore, then a scanty diet is to be adopted so far as can be borne; after that the strength should be a little reinforced and the bowels clystered; subsequently, when the system has been relieved, exercise and ~~running~~ is to be used. Sweating should be induced primarily by the patient's own exertion, afterwards also by dry sweatings, rubbing is to be employed with moderation so that strength is preserved. The bath should be seldom used; neither fatty nor glutinous nor flatulent food; wine is properly given except on the first days. Plantain crushed and smeared on seems to protect the body best.³⁷

Scribonius Largus in the first century A. D. suggested that black sulphur mixed with common oil would cure leprosy,³⁸ and Cassius Felix stressed frequent purgations.³⁹ Pliny the Elder believed that wild mint was good for the disease, and that the disease was of so loathsome a nature that any form of death was preferable to it.⁴⁰

³⁵ S. Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi *Etymologiarum Libri IV* in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Series Latina, LXXII, 191-192.

³⁶ *Loc. Cit.*

³⁷ Celsus, *De Medicina*, I, 342-345.

³⁸ Scribonius Largus, *Compositiones*, p. 97.

³⁹ Cassius Felix, *De Medicina*, pp. 177-178.

⁴⁰ Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis*, Book xx, Chapter 22 and Book xxvi, Chapter 1.

Marcellus Empiricus suggested that leprosy might be cured by the following remedies: the ashes of a burned fish and burned elephant, mixed with blood and smeared on the body; ground native soda with honey and an ox's intestine; the root of asparagus boiled down in vinegar and *trita*; crushed wild mint leaves; and cedar oil. He further suggested the placing of ground elecampane upon the body. At first this would make the body sore, but by wiping away the pus and decayed skin, the body would be new and without scars.⁴¹ Oribasius, on the other hand, suggested cooked vipers with a sauce made of water, oil, warts, and "aneth"; purgatives; promenades; exercises; salves; mineral water baths; sweats; and salves for the ulcers.⁴²

Although one reference to the use of oil⁴³ and another to the use of the bath⁴⁴ were found, most of the references to the cure of leprosy among the Franks have to do with the supernatural powers of the clergy. An example is pertinent: On a certain day, while Gaugericus, Bishop of Cambrai, was engaged in prayers, a certain leper came to him. Up to this time the leper had been a sinner. Moved by the bishop, he was pardoned of his sins and was baptized. Then after having heard mass and after having been blessed by the bishop, the deacon, and the priest, the leper was as if he had never been afflicted with leprosy.⁴⁵ Similar stories appear in the Merovingian chronicles.⁴⁶

Attitude Toward Lepers

Something of the attitude of the ancients and the early Franks toward lepers can be found in the sources. According to Herodotus, Persians afflicted with the disease could not enter cities or have any dealings with other Persians.⁴⁷ From stone landmarks, it appears that lepers of ancient Babylon were banished to the desert.⁴⁸ Laws of the Jews condemned lepers to the wilderness and forbade them from entering cities.⁴⁹ And the Roman

⁴¹Marcellus Empiricus, *De Medicamentis*, *passim*.

⁴²Oribasius, *Oeuvres*, VI, 197.

⁴³"Vita Columbani Abbatis Discipulorum que Eius Liber II" in *M.G.H., Scriptores Rerum Meroving.*, IV, 147.

⁴⁴"Vita Richardii Confessoris Centulensis Actore Alcuino" in *M.G.H., Scriptores Rerum Meroving.*, IV, 392.

⁴⁵"Vita Gaugerici Episcopi Cameracensis" in *M.G.H., Scriptores Rerum Meroving.*, III, 653.

⁴⁶For stories similar to that told in footnote 45 *supra*, see also "Vita Desiderii Episcopi Viennensis" in *M.G.H., Scriptores Rerum Meroving.*, III, 640, "Virtutes Fursei Abbatis Latinacensis" in *ibid.*, IV, 441, and "Vita Romarici Abbatis Habendensis" in *ibid.*, IV, 224.

⁴⁷Herodotus, *History*, I, 215.

⁴⁸James A. Tobey, *Riders of the Plagues*, p. 21 and Henry E. Siegrist, *A History of Medicine*, I, 381.

⁴⁹See footnote 7 *supra*.

physician, Oribasius, writing in the fourth century, felt that lepers ought to remain outside the city.⁵⁰

Fear of contagion from lepers also prevailed among the early Franks. According to one writer, Rotharis, King of the Lombards, issued a regulation in 643 depriving anyone afflicted with leprosy the right of remaining in the kingdom and of holding property.⁵¹ In a capitulary of 757, Pepin, King of the Franks, provided that "if a leprous man had a sound wife and wished to give her freedom to marry again, she might do so if she wished." The converse of this was also true.⁵² And Charlemagne later followed this law with another, in which he stated that "lepers might not intermingle with other people."⁵³

Even though lepers were generally regarded with loathing and fear during the ancient and early medieval times, at a rather early date certain benevolent men began to show mercy to those afflicted with the disease. In a panegyric on Saint Basil, Saint Gregory of Nyssa extolled the work of his brother among lepers as follows:

There is no longer before our eyes that terrible and piteous spectacle of men who are living corpses, the greater part of whose limbs have mortified, driven away from their cities and homes and public places and fountains, aye, and from their own dearest ones, recognizable by their names rather than by their features: they are no longer brought before us at our gatherings and meetings, in our common intercourse and union, no longer the objects of hatred, instead of pity on account of their disease; composers of piteous songs, if any of them have their voice still left to them. Why should I try to express in their tragic style all our experiences, when no language can be adequate to their hard lot. He however it was, who took the lead in pressing upon those who were men, that they ought not to despise their fellow men, nor to

⁵⁰ Oribasius, *Oeuvres*, VI, 197.

⁵¹ Agnes Lambert, "Leprosy Past and Present" in *Nineteenth Century*, XVI (1884), p. 468.

⁵² "Capitularia Pippini Francorum," in *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, V, 643 and "Pippini Capitularia" in *M.G.H., Leges*, I, sec. 2, p. 39. Basing his reference on the laws of Rotharis, king of the Lombards, Thomas Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1894), VI, 201, states: "If a woman became afflicted with leprosy, her betrothed was not bound to marry her."

⁵³ "Karoli Magni Capitularia" in *M.G.H., Leges*, I, sec. 2, p. 64.

dishonour Christ, the one Head of all, by their inhuman treatment of them;... He did not therefore disdain to honor with his lips this disease, noble and of noble ancestry and brilliant reputation though he was, but saluted them as brethren, not as some might suppose, from vainglory,... but taking the lead in approaching to tend them.... The effect produced is to be seen not only in the city, but in the country and beyond, and even the leaders of society have vied with one another in their philanthropy and magnanimity towards them.... Basil's care was for the sick, and the relief of their wounds, and the imitation of Christ, by cleansing leprosy, not by a word, but in deed.⁵⁴

Saint John Chrysostom, who lived about the time of Saint Basil, stated that "it was formerly the custom for lepers to be cast from the state, but now this is not done."⁵⁵ Evidently the work of men such as Saint Basil was beginning to have some effect, but it would be easy to overstress this point in view of documentary evidence to the contrary.

The humane treatment of lepers also early took the form of establishing leper houses for those afflicted. In the third session of the Council of Chalcedon, Ischyron complained that his patriarch, Dioscorus, had misapplied funds for founding such a house.⁵⁶ By the second half of the fifth century, leper houses were already functioning among the Franks. Edward Ehlers discovered that such houses were operating at Saint Oyan in 460, at Chalons, Saone, in 570, and at Verdun in 634.⁵⁷ And L. de Keyser found that Belgium alone had from seven to eight hundred leper houses before the crusades.⁵⁸

Despite the work of Basil and other early churchmen, the policy of the church towards lepers was slow in assuming its form. A church council meeting at Orleans in November 549 decreed that priests should minister to lepers, give them clothing and food, and show them mercy because of their intolerable infirmity.⁵⁹ Thirty-four years later a provincial council at Lyons decided that bishops should furnish food and clothing for the lepers of their

⁵⁴ "Panegyric on S. Basil by Gregory of Nazianzus" in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, VII, 416.

⁵⁵ *Johannis Chrysostomi Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani Opera Omnia*, ed. by Bernard de Montefaucon, 13 vols. (Paris, 1718-1738), VI, 129.

⁵⁶ Mansi, VI, 1013, 1017.

⁵⁷ Edward Ehlers, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

⁵⁸ L. de Keyser, "Ueber die belgischen Leprosorien im Mittelalter," (a review) in *Janus*, XVII (1912), 286-288.

⁵⁹ Mansi, IX, 134.

city and that lepers should not leave the city without license.⁶⁰ At length a council meeting at Worms took the attitude that lepers, "if they had been faithful Christians, might partake of the body and blood of the Lord. They might not, however, be allowed to celebrate the feast along with those who were not afflicted." ⁶¹

Today modern medical teaching has removed much of the stigma attached to the word leprosy or Hansen's Disease, as it is now called. There are many, however, who still hear the word with fear and loathing. If modern medical teaching has not been able to eradicate such an attitude, what, then, must have been that of ancient and early medieval man, who lacked the benefits of modern medical knowledge and who was bound on all sides by superstition and magic.

⁶⁰ Mansi, IX, 943.

⁶¹ Mansi, XV, 875.

The Function of the Library in Higher Education

by

A. F. Kuhlman

We have met today to do honor to a man, Fred Tom Mitchell, under whose quiet and effective leadership this beautiful and important building was conceived and brought into being. Henceforth, it is to bear his name. The importance of this event is not that in the future this building will bear the name of Fred Tom Mitchell and remind our generation and future generations of him as President of Mississippi State College in the years 1945-1953. That would be something fine and great, but we are here concerned with something which transcends that.

The importance of this event stems from the meaning of a library and the meaning of books and of knowledge in the service of this College, of this State and of mankind. What is this meaning? I believe John Dewey has given us a conception of man which places books, libraries and knowledge, in fact everything important that goes on in this college, into proper perspective. In his immortal essay, *Democracy and Education*, he has pointed out that the most notable distinction between living and inanimate beings is that living beings maintain themselves by means of their capacity for self-renewal. They are able to use light, air, moisture and the products of the soil to preserve and to renew themselves. On the purely animal level, renewal or reproduction is essentially a physical process. But with the renewal of man's physical existence there goes the renewal or re-creation of his beliefs, ideals, hopes, happiness, knowledge and inventions or physical technology -- in short the renewal of his civilization. This means that the distinctive and unique feature of man is that he has a capacity to produce culture and his progress and survival are inextricably interwoven with it.

As civilization becomes complex the gap between the adjustments that we can make when born into the world and the complex life society requires us to live widens progressively. The only way in which each new generation can bridge this gap and can survive is by transmitting the essential experiences of the human race that are useful and that make for survival. In this process of preserving and transmitting human experience from person to person and from generation to generation, language and books represent basic media of communication. In them mankind stores and transmits at least in part its

Dr. Kuhlman, who is director of the Joint University Libraries of Nashville, Tennessee, delivered the principal address at the dedication of the Mitchell Memorial Library on May 19, 1954. Dr. Kuhlman was library consultant to Mississippi State College during the construction of its new library.

experience, and one of the prime functions of colleges and universities and of their libraries is to assist youth in taking out of this vast spiritual heritage of the race the things that will make not just survival but successful living possible. By successful living I mean the capacity to find in life and to give in living *the good things* that make life human and worth while.

Thus we note that human society exists through a process of transmission of culture. It is this great spiritual inheritance that makes us human. This cultural transmission occurs by means of communication of attitudes and of habits of doing, thinking, feeling and believing from one generation to the next. Without this communication of ideals, hopes, standards and values, social life and civilization could not survive. Dewey says society not only continues to exist by transmission, i. e. by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission. The purpose of schools, colleges and of books and libraries is to expedite this all-important process of preserving and transmitting man's heritage.

This land-grant college and its library are not just another college and another library. The land-grant college in America, (as pointed out by Paul Monroe and others) if it is true to its original mission (and I am certain Mississippi State College has always sought to be) is primarily concerned with community development rather than the benefit of the individual student. It was created under the Morrill Act of 1862 partly as a reaction against the then existing liberal arts colleges. Those colleges were taking the children from industrial and agricultural families and preparing them for the learned professions. While this served the purpose of the individuals who were being educated and given an opportunity for "self-improvement," it was considered inimical to the general welfare. The promoters of the land-grant college movement wanted to train and develop leaders for the farm and industry. They wanted to put industrial and agricultural pursuits on a par with the professions through the applications of science and the activities of educated men and women. And how well they have succeeded! Through the research of agricultural experiment stations, agriculture became respectable and gradually was considered one of the great fields of scientific inquiry challenging our best scientists and scholars.

Thus our agricultural colleges and their libraries have come to serve three great purposes: (1) to provide campus instruction to transmit and diffuse the funded knowledge to youth that will be beneficial to them as they go back to their community; (2) to foster scientific research which will deal with agricultural and related problems in our economy and to add to our fund of tested knowledge and best practices, and (3) to provide for adult education or extension work through which to transmit to the farmer, to business and industry the best knowledge and practices available to help them in solving their problems and to enrich their lives. Realizing how interwoven and interdependent our lives and activities have become, these colleges now concern themselves with almost our whole economy with a view of adding to our total well-being.

When Dr. Mitchell returned to his home state and to his Alma Mater in 1945 as President of this institution, he well knew one of the things it needed was a library. His administrative attitude with reference to the importance of an adequate library was clear and sound. In February of 1948 he presented to the Legislature of Mississippi a brochure outlining the requirements of a much needed library for Mississippi State College and in the opening sentences of his message to the Legislature he said in part:

A library is the most urgent building need of Mississippi State College. The College has been without a library throughout its sixty-eight years of existence. Never before has the need for adequate library facilities been so pressing. The personnel of our faculty has been greatly strengthened in recent years and a modern library is now a prerequisite to its effectiveness in teaching, research and public service.

At this time our library occupies unattractive, inconvenient and inadequate quarters on the third floor of the Biology Building. Here we can house only 80,000 or 67.8 per cent of our books. The other 40,000 volumes are scattered in 21 small collections in various buildings and departments. At present, most of these scattered collections exist without supervision in the daytime and are locked up in the evening, the very time when they should be accessible. It would be prohibitive in cost to supervise that many scattered collections.

Moreover, at present, only 160 students can be seated in our library reading rooms out of a student body of approximately 3,500 -- less than five per cent. According to prevailing land-grant college library standards, we should be able to accommodate at least twenty per cent in a comfortable, well lighted library building.

You know the story. He got through the State Building Commission and the Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning more than \$900,000 with which to build the building we are naming in his honor and memory today.

Helping to plan this building, as library building consultant, was one of the pleasantest and most rewarding experiences of my life, for Dr. Mitchell was familiar with the libraries of the great land-grant colleges of the Midwest and East. He never said no to a single proposal to make this building as beautiful, as comfortable and useful as possible within the available funds. He understood the requirements of a good land-grant college library building such

as favorable working conditions for study -- quiet, good light, comfortable chairs and adequate table and desk surface for students, faculty and library staff and suitable shelving for organizing the ever-growing collections for intelligent use. He was quick to see that full air conditioning of such a building at State College was a necessity.

But, from the outset, Dr. Mitchell was aware of the fact that a suitable library plant was only one essential to getting adequate library service at State College. Even before construction of this building got underway he was working on the second essential -- the improvement of the book collections. In 1948/49 he secured for this purpose a grant of \$35,000 from the General Education Board which the College matched with \$90,000. This meant that library expenditures increased from \$45,365 in 1947/48 to \$129,928 in 1951/52. Of this sum, \$60,144.31 was for books, periodicals and binding -- a landmark in the history of this institution.

If General Stephen D. Lee could only see your collection now! In his biennial report for 1892/93 (when your library had less than 3,500 volumes) he complained that "the library consists mainly of United States Government books. It is deficient in technical and literary books. There are but few books of reference even." Today your volume count has reached the 170,000 mark. But what is more important than the number of volumes is the quality of the material that was added during Dr. Mitchell's administration. I have recently had the pleasure of examining the collection on the shelves and was pleased to note the progress made in acquiring the great scientific periodicals and numerous definitive separate works in such fundamental fields as agronomy, botany, chemistry, entomology and zoology. That is a part of the special kind of culture and heritage that you need here in this land-grant institution to serve the specialized needs and opportunities of Mississippi's youth and her economy.

Dr. Mitchell also realized that the growth of the collections, and moving into your new library building, had to be paralleled with a rapidly growing staff made competent through appropriate academic and technical training and experience. During his seven years as president here your library staff, professional and clerical, was increased from five to twenty. This institution will forever be greatly indebted to Miss Nannie H. Rice, who for a quarter of a century before President Mitchell came to State College as its President made library brick for you without straw. She and her small staff of devoted and capable assistants did the best that was humanly possible with insufficient funds in totally inadequate library quarters. Your present library staff, under the leadership of Donald E. Thompson, would be a credit to any land-grant college. It is bringing to fruition a fourth essential of an adequate college library -- namely a functional and integrated organization of materials (formerly scattered in twenty-one collections) for easy use and in line with the requirements for indefinite growth of collections. A library is more than a pile of thousands of books. It is a systematic and intelligible organization of printed

and other materials so related to one another as to reveal the organization, the interrelatedness and the unity of all knowledge. But a good collection, well cataloged and classified, is only a part of what is essential. Knowledge and libraries have become so complex that it requires skilled guidance, we call it reference service, to aid the searcher in learning how to find those products of scholarship that will be of help to him. That calls for more than technicians. It calls for such subject specialization, plus technical expertness, as will give insight into and understanding of our great intellectual heritage so that our students and faculty may get the most out of it.

These then are four of the essentials to effective library resources and services at Mississippi State College that Fred Tom Mitchell understood and worked to realize. But there are two others that were of equal importance in his mind: One is stable and adequate financial support and the other is integration of the resources and services of the library with the instruction, research and public service of this school. A shorter word for integration is effective use. One further word about these two essentials. During Dr. Mitchell's regime you have made educational progress in many ways: (1) in expanding and vitalizing your curricula and course offerings on all levels, especially in upper class and graduate work; (2) in scientific research and its applications to the improvement of the economy of Mississippi; (3) in increased direct service to your people through extension; (4) in leadership in the region and in the nation in those numerous specialized research and public service activities in which land-grant colleges at their best participate and excel; (5) in the expansion and renovation of your physical plant and facilities and (6) in the upgrading of your faculty by doubling the number of faculty members with the masters degree and the doctorate. This story for Mississippi State College seems like a miracle. I am sure it surpasses the fondest hopes and dreams that most of you had when Dr. Mitchell came here in 1945 as your president. But the end is not yet. Still greater things are possible, but let me caution you on one point. In upgrading your visible faculty do not overlook upgrading and bringing up and keeping abreast of the times this great invisible faculty of scientists, scholars, and leaders in public services represented by the steady stream of new books, periodicals and other cultural materials that must steadily flow into your library for they are the very life blood of effective teaching and progress in your research and public service. What I am saying is that the funds for the purchase of library materials and for attracting and holding a qualified library staff must be stable and must be reasonably adequate; otherwise you will not be able to hold some of the fine talent you have attracted and built into your faculty and library staff, or if it stays it will not be able to do its best for your students and your economy.

Finally, how can you integrate this great unseen faculty represented by your library collections and the skilled reference service with your program of instruction, research and public service? How can you get the quality and quantity of use of these greatly enlarged resources that they merit? That question was of great concern to President Mitchell and he asked a committee

of your local chapter of the American Association of University Professors to study the problem and report on what could be done about it. That Committee has made a good beginning but much more can and no doubt will be done about it. But this is not the time to consider that complex subject. Suffice it to say first, that those of us who planned this building did so with faith. We believed that this building would ultimately become the great symbol of this college at its best in teaching, research and public service. We sought to create here a thing of beauty where there would be assembled the best things achieved by the human spirit in fields related to the purposes of this institution. Here has been provided a favorable situation for study, research, personal development and public service. Second, there is nothing unique and local about this problem of only limited use of your library. It relates to the confusion we have had in recent years in higher education in many institutions and the problem of developing genuine intellectual curiosity in a student community in which there is too much uncertainty as to their personal future, too much distraction from automobiles, television sets, week ends spent away from the campus having a good time, and the distraction of athletics and sports. But more than that, the college library as it has emerged in America in the 1950's is a *new instrument* and on many of our campuses the administration and the faculties have not learned how to use it fully and to the best advantage. Our philosophies of higher education, our methods of instruction and reading requirements and examinations and course grades are still too largely centered in the student-bought textbook. It is not easy to teach with library materials, for the professor has to work much harder than his students if he really tries it. Here and there we have a faculty member who tries it and succeeds at it, but it will have to have wider support than that.

College and university librarians cannot dictate or require library usage either by the faculty or students. Responsibility for motivation of library use rests primarily with the faculty. It is in a position to inspire, dictate and require use, and then librarians can facilitate or expedite it through skillful and helpful guidance and service.

Ladies and gentlemen, this tremendous new emphasis upon an adequate college library is not an accident and it need not represent a big investment upon which you do not get an adequate return.

There are at least five reasons why the college library, next to the faculty, has on many campuses become the center and source of the intellectual life of the institution. These are some of the reasons:

(1) The body of funded knowledge, i.e. the wisdom of the ages, with which college subjects deal, has become so vast and diversified that few subjects can now be treated satisfactorily in student-bought textbooks. Single textbook courses have already yielded to a large extent to the use of many books and other materials in libraries.

(2) There has been increased registration in and a tremendous development of the social sciences. In them new material is produced at a rapid rate and access to a wide range of material is essential if students are to understand our rapidly changing social scene and keep abreast of new discoveries, new social and scientific applications.

(3) Mass education, i.e. large classes, have broken down the textbook recitation method of teaching and a substitute is being sought in lectures and directed extensive reading and study in the library.

(4) Survey courses have been introduced to provide a basis for a broad and a general education. They cannot be taught successfully with one or several textbooks. They require a wide range of material carefully selected and organized so as to make orientation and mastery of subject possible.

(5) There is a definite trend in many colleges toward setting up specific educational goals not merely in the work of the junior college and the liberal arts college, where the object is general and liberal education, but in technical and professional training, where there are supposed to be communicable techniques based upon a body of accepted and tested principles. These educational goals are set up in terms of measurable educational attainments in which achievement tests and comprehensive examinations are accepted as an integral part of the educational system. Such a system presupposes, in case of large classes, that all students have had access to the same materials so as to give a basis for common "examinability."

It is these movements in higher education which have made the college library an indispensable part of the equipment for teaching, research and public service. This explains why some of our great technical schools like Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology, North Carolina and Oklahoma A. and M. Colleges and your own institution have recently made large investments in their libraries. These new and large buildings are symbols of a part of the great heritage of our Western Civilization. While these institutions have in the past been almost exclusively technical schools, they are, nevertheless, broadening their programs to include the humanities and social sciences, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology has already incorporated a School of Humanities and Social Studies in its organization.

To summarize, what then are the functions of the library in higher education? They are:

(1) To provide a building and equipment suitable for acquiring, organizing, preserving and using under conditions favorable for study, inspiration and research an authoritative collection of library materials.

(2) To provide through careful selection those library materials that are suitable for the achievement of the institution's objectives: in teaching,

productive research, public service and for the personal development of its students, faculty and staff through reading. Building such a collection is chiefly the faculty's responsibility, for each teacher should know who are the masters in his field and see to it that they are properly represented in your library.

(3) To provide a library staff qualified in its academic and technical preparation to organize the collections for easy and effective use and to seek to provide in the cataloging and classification of books (with some help from the faculty) a frame of reference that is sound for the indefinite growth of the collections and that will reveal the interrelatedness and unity of knowledge.

(4) To integrate the library resources and services with the institution's total program, i. e. the *promotion of the fullest use* of our rich spiritual, cultural and technical heritage represented by the library's holdings in instruction, research and public service and in the intellectual development of students, faculty and staff. This integration calls for a two-fold approach. It is chiefly the responsibility of the academic teaching and research and public service staff. For in the main only the faculty can plan, inspire or require the use of library materials. But the library staff can cooperate with the faculty in many ways in promoting the use of library materials.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, in dedicating your Library to the memory of Fred Tom Mitchell we dedicate it to the achievement of all of the fine things that he wanted for this institution and its students and faculty, that he wanted for his native state and the welfare of its people. He loved Mississippi -- its past and its present -- and **had unbounded faith in its future.**

We dedicate this Library to the preservation, the perpetuation and extension of all that is best in our culture -- our great Christian and democratic heritage. We dedicate it to the great quest in which thousands of Mississippi youth and citizens will come to this campus to its living teachers and scientists and to that great invisible community of scholars and scientists, the fruits of whose labors will be housed in the Mitchell Memorial Library.

We dedicate this building to Mississippi youth, to their endless search for truth, for beauty, for righteousness, for peace of mind and fortitude -- to those qualities of the spirit that we cultivate through books and libraries.

In closing, may I make so bold as to remind you that *to dedicate means to give something*. I am glad to note that I will be followed on this program by the Chairman of your Library Committee who will tell us something about a group of Friends of the Mississippi State Library. Every library needs a group of Friends who believe in it and will promote its welfare by helping it locate and acquire important books and special collections. Your Library is getting a late start in acquiring books and collections of distinction. It needs many friends and many special collections. It would seem fitting that this day

when we are gathered to honor Fred Tom Mitchell by naming this library in his honor, that those of us who knew, admired and loved him should through our personal gifts start here a fund for a Fred Tom Mitchell collection of Mississippiana. I should count it a privilege to have a small part in such a wonderful living memorial.

May God richly bless the Mitchell Memorial Library with those great collections of books that contain the great truths that will enable men to live good and useful lives.

American Gothic:

THE STORY OF THE PHILADELPHIA CENTENNIAL OF 1876

by

Nancy Kizer

VI. The House Bountiful

Interior decoration in the seventies proved that the fantastic outer shell of the American home was not misleading. The most lavish, and therefore the most offending room, was the parlor. The furnishings of the parlor were designed for show. The description of the frontier "best room" in *Huckleberry Finn*¹ with its stiff crayon portraits, its "Friendships Offering" atop an oil-cloth-covered center table, its artificial fruit, its split-bottomed chairs, and a decor featuring turkey wings, — all this was not crudely *passé* to the fashionable. Mark Twain could describe its bleakness with tongue in cheek, but it is doubtful whether its descendents were really more pleasing. The parlor of the well-to-do was certainly not bleak; it was cluttered. It was cozy. Barrenness in the seventies was to be avoided at all costs.

All bare spaces [were] covered with draperies, skirts, and ruffles of velvet, satin, or embroidery. Even the mantel shelf [had] its hanging drapery, with a Van Dyke edge and decorated with bead work embroidered with metal threads.²

At the Centennial this "cluttered" style was seen in the exhibits of fringes, gimps, cords, tassels, passementerie, and other upholstery goods.³

As seen in almost every contemporary description of Centennial exhibits, "ornate" and "ornamental" are common listings in the catalogue.⁴ As for American furnishings, Ingram felt that in "exquisite carving" and "tasteful" and beautiful upholstery" the American furniture at Philadelphia compared favorably with that of any other country afforded "a striking evidence of the advancement of our people in manufacturing skill and correct artistic taste."⁵

This is the third instalment of a series of articles based on Mrs. Kizer's thesis for the M.S. degree at Mississippi State College.

¹Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* (New York, 1927), pp. 128-133.

²Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 408-411.

³*Official Catalogue*, I, p. 150.

⁵Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

The parlor furniture of the seventies was an ornate dust-catcher. It was also extremely uncomfortable, as evidenced by the complaint of one comfort-loving male of the period who, on viewing the American furniture display, declared that "the fault of our furniture is that it is not comfortable, though always too fine for use....[It] might have been useful for subjects who could not be quelled by the rack."⁶ Perhaps some of his complaint arose over the products of firms like the Pawtucket Hair Cloth company, surveyors of "automatically woven hair cloths for upholstery."⁷ The Medieval hair-cloth shirt was now wreaking penance on other portions of the anatomy.

Lovers of comfort were to have promise of relief in at least one Centennial display, a combination rocking and reclining chair,⁸ the first of its kind. Even here bodily ease seemed only secondary. This gorgeous ancestor of the present-day platform rocker fabricated of an intricate combination of striped plush broche trimmed with puffed satin was set in a gilt-decorated ebony frame.⁹

If the worst of contemporary taste was catered to in the parlor, American furniture dealers were hard at work to revolutionize the American bedroom with iron furniture. Most of the manufacturers rationalized the resort to iron on the score of health. O'Hara of Philadelphia had "hygienic chairs."¹⁰ Goodwin of Massachusetts advertised "sanitary bedsteads."¹¹

The rank and file, accustomed to a friendly exchange of germs by way of the community drinking cup could not be swept off its feet by sanitary gods. Despite the novelty of the new metal beds, such innovations made slow headway. Nevertheless, the biggest splash in the metal-products exhibit was made by an enormous metal bed, richly ornamented. Produced at a cost of some twelve thousand dollars, this enormous affair so impressed affluent visitors that copies found their way into bedrooms of Lillian Russell and Lola Montez.¹²

Beauty, comfort, and hygiene were joined by a fourth factor in Centennial furniture. The movement toward urban living having put living room at a premium for perhaps the first time, space saving was stressed in what Louis Carrol might have called "portmanteau" furniture. The result was such things as folding settees; folding bedsteads and tables combined; folding beds and adjustable extension chairs; folding wardrobes and lounges; magic sofa beds; combination cribs and swings; combination work tables, lapboards, and writing desks; and combination desks and bookcases.¹³

⁶Characteristics of the International Fair: Number 4," *loc. cit.*, p. 494.

⁷*Official Catalogue*, I, p. 122. ⁸*Ibid.*, I, p. 110.

⁹Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

¹⁰*Official Catalogue*, I, p. 112.

¹¹*Ibid.*, I, p. 111.

¹²Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

¹³*Official Catalogue*, I, pp. 111-112; Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

That these combinations were sometimes highly interesting is attested by Ingram's account of the "crowds of interested spectators watching and inspecting the operation of folding and opening these bedsteads." Ingram also mentions an "ingenious" sleeping apartment — bed, washstand, and all — which could be enveloped in a wall eighteen inches deep.¹⁴

In woman's private domain, the kitchen, changes and improvements were strangely lacking, except for labor-saving devices for wash day. Prizes were awarded to exhibitors of adjustable ironing tables and clothes wringers.¹⁵ Two American firms also featured fluting machines to lighten the burden of hand-ironing ruffles.¹⁶ A Dr. W. H. Calvin was praised for the "adaptability and easy application of his ironing machine."¹⁷ A few firms exhibited washing machines.¹⁸ Also, as we have seen earlier, some improvements were made in ranges.¹⁹ To prove that Yankee ingenuity was not wholly lacking, a new gas radiant flat iron received a lengthy description in one account.²⁰ British manufacturers came forward with a knife-cleaning machine and a patent coffee filter.²¹

The dining room, except for table accessories of ceramics, silver, and gilt electro-plating, apparently received little attention at the fair. Several sideboards were listed and one firm had a table with folding leaves.²² The general decadence of the taste of the period may, however, be seen in the admiration expressed for the heavily carved ebony sideboards and mosaic tables found in the Spanish section.²³

Early American furniture had possessed the virtue of simple craftsmanship, and designs by Duncan-Phyfe had rivaled those of Chippendale and Adams. At the Centennial, however, the question was no longer what ornament to use but "how much?"²⁴ Excessive display at the lowest possible cost had become the aim of the seventies.²⁵

This drastic decline in quality was not wholly caused by a general slump in public taste. New wealth had created new demands so that "the power to buy out-ran the ability to choose."²⁶ The low ebb in American

¹⁴Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 382.

¹⁵Report of the New Jersey Commissioners, p. 391.

¹⁶Official Catalogue, I, p. 115.

¹⁷Report of the New Jersey Commissioners, p. 44.

¹⁸Official Catalogue, I, p. 44.

¹⁹What is the Centennial, p. 8.

²⁰Howells, *loc. cit.*, p. 105.

²¹Official Catalogue, I, p. 148.

²²*Ibid.*, I, p. 112.

²³Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 460.

²⁴Kimerly, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

²⁵Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

²⁶Hacker, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

household furniture may have come also from the fact that an unprecedented demand had tempted many half-trained workers into the field.²⁷ Cheap machine-made carvings could be glued on to replace the loving care expended by European or early American craftsmen.²⁸

Fortunately, the British at this period were considerably ahead of this country in furniture design.²⁹ As early as 1861 William Morris had formed Morris & Company as a venture in raising the standards of British taste.³⁰ The British furniture entries at Philadelphia introduced these new ideas to Americans to good effect.

Whereas ordinary furniture was usually black walnut, as fussy as its mistress's bustle, the new British designs looked to the simpler Queen Anne and Jacobean periods for inspiration.³¹ The furniture suite, and innovation of the mid-Victorian era, began to look a little fusty to visitors who first viewed the exquisite faience, Eastlake furniture, and minton tiles from British workshops.

The British also served to reintroduce mahogany, which had been supplanted by oak in popular favor. Those who "visited the British section must have seen what an exquisite wood mahogany is . . . in the hands of an artisan who understands its character," we are told.³² Mahogany and satinwood were both featured in a sideboard, a secretaire, a writing table, some side tables, and a cabinet of eighteenth century design sent by Wright & Mansfield, only British winners of a gold medal at the previous Paris Exposition.³³

Carved oak was not wholly absent, of course, and articles such as a sideboard with stained wainscot and embossed leather were exhibited.³⁴ British furniture at the Centennial, nevertheless, was to have a most salutatory effect upon American ideas in this line. Evolution, not revolution, is shown by the fact that there was some resistance to the new ideas both in word and deed. A sophisticate like Howells might admit that "the British are in advance of us."³⁵ Others, who were mere outspoken, countered with complaints that "the British are in advance of us on the wrong track."³⁶

²⁷Kimerly, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

²⁸Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

²⁹Hazel K. Rockow and Julius Rockow, *Creative Home Decorating*, (New York, 1946), p. 119.

³⁰Hazelton Spencer, Walter E. Houghton, and Herbert Barrows, "William Morris," *British Literature from Blake to the Present Day* (Boston, 1952), p. 781.

³¹Hamlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 270, 455.

³²Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 410-411.

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 410-411.

³⁴*Idem.*

³⁵Howells, *loc. cit.*, p. 99.

³⁶"Characteristics of the International Fair: Number 3," *loc. cit.*, p. 351.

If British furniture received well-deserved laurels at the Centennial, the carpet weavers of Asia Minor received honors in the field of textiles for household use. A critic had complained that nothing needed "enlightening more than the carpet trade."³⁷ Asia Minor provided this enlightenment.

In the seventies American taste leaned toward Axminster, Kedderminster, or American Wilton carpets decorated in the school of Owen Jones.³⁸ Thus, in the twenty-one carpet displays catalogued for American firms, the listings of Jacquard, Brussels and Wilton carpets rivalled ingrain carpets in popularity, although a few (e.g., Gibb & Company) advertised rag carpets or plush rugs or tapestry carpeting (e.g., Roxbury of Boston). The British — then an important source for American floor coverings — leaned heavily toward Brussels and Wilton carpets. Axminster rugs are also found among the thirteen exhibits listed. One French firm, Gravier, Clement & Nimes, advertised velvet carpets.³⁹

Prior to the Centennial all oriental carpets had been termed Turkish in popular parlance.⁴⁰ A number of European firms at the Centennial produced copies of "Turkey" carpets. Among the German exhibits Ingram noted imitation Smyrna carpets.⁴¹ The *Catalogue* also mentions imitation Smyrna carpets among textiles shown by the Netherlands.⁴²

Many visitors at Philadelphia were to behold genuine oriental rugs for the first time in their lives. One British company advertised Indian and Persian carpets. China also sent a number of felt rugs. However, it was the glowing masterpieces of the Near East that attracted most attention. Turkish carpets were especially noteworthy for their color and durability, one specimen having retained its pristine freshness after seventy years of use.⁴³ The genuine Turkish carpets proved more satisfactory than the pseudo-Turkish cafes. A multitude of visitors were to create a thriving market for these rugs from Asia Minor. Many and fantastic were the floor coverings that resulted from the oriental craze awakened by the Centennial.⁴⁴

Decorative fabrics other than tapestries for household use attracted some notice. Several of the foreign nations, among them Sweden, displayed progress in this direction.⁴⁵ The Russian showings of some "superb" damask napkins created comment because no one expected such skill from that "bearish

³⁷R. Sturgis, "Oriental Carpets," *Nation*, XXIII (June, 1876), p. 394.

³⁸Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

³⁹*Official Catalogue*, I, pp. 122, 150, 195.

⁴⁰Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁴¹Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

⁴²*Official Catalogue*, I, p. 220.

⁴³*Ibid.*, I, pp. 150, 241.

⁴⁴Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁴⁵Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 542.

nation." Ingram was especially laudatory about the German linen and fine damask products, which as he pointed out, found a "ready market" in America.⁴⁶ M. Ray of Brussels displayed table linen of all qualities and widths up to 123 inches.⁴⁷

Belgian weavers were outstanding for their tapestries shown at the Centennial. Some of these were portraits, like those of Rubens and of a gentleman in Arabian costume. Others used mythological themes, like the eight panel representation of eight gods; or historical subjects, like a full-length painting in Louis XVI style. Spain exhibited tapestries from the Royal factory. France exhibited copies of old tapestries.⁴⁸

If the near East captured the American carpet market after the exhibition at Philadelphia, it was the Far East that set the style for ceramics in the years following the Centennial. Heretofore only the crowned heads of Europe had seen or possessed rare Chinese porcelains. From his private collection China's richest banker, Hu Quany Yung, displayed some of the rarest specimens of ancient Chinese pottery making. Rare specimens of enamelled and "Cloisonne" wares, each from two to five hundred years old, represented nearly extinct arts that had once flourished in China. Wares made during the Ming dynasty were also among the priceless articles shown at Philadelphia.⁴⁹

The Chinese ceramics were not, however, limited to priceless antiques. There was a thriving market for contemporary productions among fair visitors. Fifteen companies distributed their wares.⁵⁰ Indeed, one *Atlantic* reporter saw elements of comedy in the grimaces and gestures of Chinese porcelain dealers at seeing their wares handled by the idly curious. Chinese porcelain attracted such crowds that buyers as well as dealers were often greatly discomfited, as shown by this description:

The interest taken in a purchase is so intense as to be painful to the purchaser. A ring forms around the latter and the vendor until the transaction is over, all hanging speechless on the dialogue between the two. When this is carried on in a foreign language the audience looks discomfited and displeased as if balked of its own rights.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Mitchell, "A Morning Stroll in the Main Building," *loc. cit.*, p. 891.

⁴⁷ Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 441, 514.

⁴⁸ *Official Catalogue*, I, pp. 217, 275, 195.

⁴⁹ Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 571-572.

⁵⁰ *Official Catalogue*, I, p. 244.

⁵¹ "Characteristics of the International Fair: Number 4," *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII (October, 1876), p. 495.

The other oriental exhibitors, the Japanese, were frankly even more commercial. The *Nation* was "impressed by the alertness and intelligence" of those in charge, and a favorable contrast was drawn with the "half-weary and wholly contented Chinese, who repose upon the laurels of the past."⁵² The Japanese wares were modern and were exhibited by forty-seven companies.⁵³

The pottery market was not entirely cornered by the Asiatics. German pottery, in spite of its lack of novelty, sold well because of its cheapness. Indian painted pottery from Mexico was also bought up quickly.⁵⁴

The honors won by the European contenders were chiefly in the form of artistic triumphs. Ellyot could see nothing in any other exhibit that could equal the works of Haviland from Limoges, whose products were "bold unconventional and excellent" and whose artists had "studied nature and art also but not to copy."⁵⁵

It was a second Limoges firm, Ad Hoche & Pepin, Legalleur Frères, that Ingram praised for its "boldness" and "originality." Here, too, the orientalism making its way into European design was very evident; so much so that to a certain extent even these French designs were a part of the movement sweeping the Chinese porcelains into major importance on the American scene.⁵⁶

Ingram, however, was more impressed by Sèvres than Haviland amid the six stalls of French porcelains. Most of these, however, were *objects d'art* and were not intended for household utility. Ingram commended highly some such wares colored like Italian Majolica.⁵⁷

Among the British potters at the Centennial, the Doultons seem to have been undisputed masters. This company boasted that it had never knowingly duplicated a design, a boast which its display at the Exhibition seems to have substantiated. The decoration on Doulton ware, both for industrial and ornamental use, was noteworthy, also, for the distinct technical processes employed to giving it variety, as well as for its enchanting coloring.⁵⁸ Ellyot, too, notes the "originality" and "beauty" of Doulton design.⁵⁹ This praise gives added lustre in the light of the dependence of the other British firms upon their French compeers. In fact, one of the most striking collections in the British section was a series of vases designed by a former Sèvres artist.⁶⁰

⁵²Mitchell, "A Morning Stroll in the Main Building," *loc. cit.*, p. 897.

⁵³*Official Catalogue*, I, p. 244.

⁵⁴Charles W. Ellyot, "Pottery at the Centennial," *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII (November, 1876), p. 568.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 572.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 457, 458.

⁵⁹Ellyot, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

⁵⁶Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 459.

⁵⁸Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 405, 406-410.

⁶⁰Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 409.

The superior utility of British pottery over French designs seemed beyond dispute. Whereas Ingram complained that one of the sets of French dinner ware was more suitable for framing than for its intended use, Ellyot especially commended the shallowness of some of the British dinner plates because, as he complained, "We have been eating so long upon plates which, with rims slanting upward, make a sort of fence to keep us away from what we so greatly desire." ⁶¹

In contrast to the French and the British pottery companies listed in the catalogue, our domestic potteries were held in low esteem. ⁶² Only a few of them, like Galloway & Gassin, showed any excellence in the production of large ornaments. The United States was too heavily dependent upon foreign imports. No American manufactures had developed any delicate clay wares. ⁶³ Indeed, most of the American products of the period would now be termed "crockery" and rated at the best with such terms as "neat" and "satisfactory." ⁶⁴ This low quality of American work was in part due to the fact that there was little public demand for excellence. Hotels as well as private consumers were willing to buy dishes "without delicacy, subtly of colors or meaning of decoration." ⁶⁵

Having once come into direct contact with superior foreign products, the general public did not lapse into its old lethargy. One of the happy results of the Centennial was that it caused people to become intensely interested in pottery making. ⁶⁶ This country was to go forward in developing its own artistic and material resources until today not only the White House but even a number of foreign capitals proudly set forth state china of purely American manufacture and design. The Centennial then may be said to have had an effect upon American pottery similar to that produced by Victoria's Prince Consort, who upon being horrified by the inane of British pottery at an earlier exposition, ⁶⁷ had pushed the artisans of his adopted country to new peaks.

Never far behind in the techniques of manufacture, the United States glass-making industry was in a much better state in 1876 than its ceramics. The crystal fountain of the Main Building was manufactured in Massachusetts. Gillinder & Sons of Philadelphia set up on the Exposition grounds a glass factory devoted chiefly to making Centennial souvenirs, and here American developments in glass-making were shown. ⁶⁸ Exhibits of lead glass, lime glass, sheet glass, blown and pressed glass, and mirrors were further proof of American development in this field. ⁶⁹

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 459; Ellyot, *loc. cit.*, p. 570.

⁶² *Official Catalogue*, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 145, 193.

⁶³ Ellyot, *op. cit.*, p. 568.

⁶⁴ *Report of the New Jersey Commissioners*, p. 371.

⁶⁵ Ellyot, *op. cit.*, p. 568. ⁶⁶ *Idem.*

⁶⁷ "Ceramics," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, eleventh edition (New York, 1911), VI, p. 757.

⁶⁸ Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-287. ⁶⁹ *Official Catalogue*, I, pp. 108, 112.

Among foreign exhibitors the Bohemian glasses in the Austro-Hungarian section were highly regarded.⁷⁰ Most of the French exhibitors seem to have laid their emphasis upon mirrors and stained-glass windows.⁷¹ The latter were said to be much clearer than the best that America could manufacture. The British had a limited number of exhibits, showing chiefly Venetian glass, table glass, and chandeliers.⁷² One critic, amazed by German bad taste in this area, remarked, "It's funny how much better this stuff looked at home."⁷³ It is significant that neither in number nor variety did the European exhibits rival American glass displays.

In the field of metal tableware — silver flatware and hollow ware — two American names that are still common household words, Gorham, and Reed & Barton, were well represented, and they exhibited many recent technical developments.⁷⁴ The *chef-d'oeuvre* of Gorham's pavilion was the "Century Vase," which some observers considered the "finest piece of silver art in the building." Standing some four feet two inches high on a base of five feet four inches, this vase was built expressly for the Centennial. It contained 2,000 ounces of solid silver and was valued at \$25,000. Its decoration included pioneers and Indians, and fruit and flowers on the base. At its top was an angel of Fame holding in one hand a palm branch and laurel wreath, and in the other a wreath of immortelles and a portrait of Washington.⁷⁵ The entire production would seem to represent the era's craving for excess ornamentation.

More pleasing to mid-twentieth century eyes was Gorham's much less valuable Cellini silver, with its more limited decoration of repoussé chasing around the edge.⁷⁶ The American taste for bizarre at this time may also be seen in Mrs. Grant's purchase of the "Hiawatha Barge," a silver monstrosity, to adorn the table at the White House.⁷⁷

Not to be outdone by a rival, Reed and Barton had a "Progress Vase," which symbolized American destiny, all the way from the landing of Columbus depicted on the pedestal to the surmounting figure of Liberty standing upon a broken chain and holding a palm and a scroll.⁷⁸ Valued at \$10,000, gaudy symbolism was as rampant here as in the more costly "Century Vase," the mere description filling more than a page.

A good illustration of the esteem which American flatware at this period inspired in international circles is seen in the purchase of a 153-piece set by one of the Swedish commissioners.⁷⁹ The admiration of contemporary critics for this product seemed to have been in some degree substantiated.

⁷⁰ Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 517.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 466.

⁷² *Official Catalogue*, I, p. 186.

⁷³ "Characteristics of the International Fair: Number 2," *Atlantic Monthly*, XXXVIII (August, 1876), p. 236.

⁷⁴ *Official Catalogue*, I, p. 186.

⁷⁵ Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 306, 307.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 309-310.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

Considering her earlier achievements in the field of metal plating, it is somewhat surprising that Great Britain was represented by only one firm, the Elkingtons. Here, too, symbolism combined with classic themes was evident in what was termed the "highest expression fine-art metal work has attained in the nineteenth century."⁸⁰ The French exhibits in silver could not be properly regarded as designed for household use, since a group of animal figurines given as prizes at various agricultural competitions were the sole representatives of the Gallic smiths.⁸¹

The Russians and Germans both included a number of elaborate hollow ware services in their collections. The Russian work especially was marked by the excellence of the repousse work similar to that seen in the Gorham exhibit. One very interesting item here was an exact copy of the tea service presented by the Emperor of Russia to his daughter, Marie, on the occasion of her marriage to the Duke of Edinburgh.⁸² This service differed from most of the other silver at the Centennial in its rich enamelling. The art of enamelling silver showed a strong oriental influence, particularly in the tea-pot decorated with painted Chinese figures.⁸³

German silverware, in contrast with that of other nations, which preened themselves upon artistic or intrinsic values, was notable for the excellence shown in its plating. The sets imitating those found at Hildesheim were beautiful for their "classic" shapes and "grace" of design.⁸⁴ Here, as in German ceramics, which seemed always to be imitations of Chinese, Japanese, or classic designs, emphasis seems to have been placed on cleverness in reproduction rather than upon originality.⁸⁵

Silver was not the metal most characteristic of the Centennial. Iron in every sense of the word might be correctly termed the metal of this Exposition. It is true that judged by mere tonnage iron would properly belong to Machinery Hall. The Victorians, however, fascinated by its ready adaptation to the construction of railways and the new super bridges, cast their eyes upon its decorative possibilities. A rash of iron store fronts, cornices, and columns molded in imitation of classic design appeared on buildings along with ornamental balconies. Then iron soon made its way into almost every part of the interior. Soon such objects as cast-iron hatracks decorated with patriotic motifs greeted visitors at the door.⁸⁶

As evidenced in the furniture exhibits, iron was the coming material in bedroom furniture. Ornamental wrought iron was especially prominent in United States exhibits. One American hardware firm at the Exposition advertised not only iron ferneries and jardinières but also a number of elaborate

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 473.

⁸² *Idem.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 494.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 430.

⁸⁶ Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

aquaria with iron frames and iron lawn settees with reversible seats. In the seventies there flourished a craze for iron statues, iron mirror frames, iron card dishes, and even iron tea services that the Centennial might have catered to but certainly did not develop.⁸⁷

The use of iron in the household was not limited to furniture or decoration since it had also found its way to the person of the mistress of the house. To insure that she would have the proper female form divine in the proper hourglass shape, corsets had an inordinate amount of iron along with the whalebone stays. Indeed, the Centennial was plentifully sprinkled with displays of corsets.⁸⁸ Mrs. H. M. Chapman of Philadelphia might boast that her puff corset "requires no padding, allows the form its natural shape without pressure," but other companies made no such claims.⁸⁹ One manufacturer boasted of his rivetless corset clasps. The currently fashionable silhouette was reflected in W. T. Hopkins' hoop skirts, panniers, and bustles, and bosom forms.⁹⁰ In fact, the whole female superstructure, properly insulated with a multitude of petticoats, concealed much structural metal — as befitted an age where buildings, furniture, and trinkets were made of iron.

VII. The Pursuit of Adornment

Clothing was exhibited by both booth and body at the Centennial. Actually, Centennial exhibits themselves were somewhat neglectful of clothing, because even though the Civil War had accustomed the American male to the idea of ready-made clothing, it had done little to overcome female prejudices in that direction.¹ There were a few companies like Homer, Colladay, & Co., who advertised ladies dresses and trousseaux or Shoenhod of New York with felt skirts.² However, a dress was something to be custom made, or at the worst, done in the home with the assistance of the Butterick Pattern Company.³

Ingram mentions how intrigued women were likely to be with the costly Paris dresses, a few of which cost over \$5,000 each.⁴ Gillou-Steyarts of Belgium exhibited an "elegant" dress of light purple silk and lace valued at \$1,225 and a second similar costume valued at \$2,175.⁵ Most of the exhibits, however, were centered about textiles or accessories.

⁸⁷Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 179; Wellman, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

⁸⁸*Official Catalogue*, I, p. 105.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, I, p. 123.

¹Partridge, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

³*Ibid.*, I, p. 123.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 512.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, I, p. 124.

²*Official Catalogue*, I, pp. 124, 127.

⁴Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 456, 467.

No country could compete with the French silks at this time; so these were one of the great attractions of the Lyons Court, which also specialized in Luxurious velvets and satins "rich enough to stand alone."⁶ Cheap cotton velvets and corduroys were shown in the German section.⁷

Nowhere were the great strides made in the last century by American manufacturers shown more than in weaving. Not only had American cotton manufactures increased greatly in the past few decades, but also this nation's production of fine textiles had greatly increased in merit.⁸ The results of this improvement may be seen in one observer's remark that a comparison of American materials and styles with those of the French made him realize that "American material is improving."⁹

Three American companies, The Phoenix Silk Manufacturing Company, John D. Cutter and Company, and a Mr. Stevens of Coventy exhibited Jacquard looms on the grounds producing the most intricate of silk patterns to be sold as souvenirs. The Stevens weavers although limiting their production at the Centennial to ribbons, could produce materials both "fine and delicate" in their weaving.¹⁰

Britain made on the whole a finer exhibit of textiles than any other country. Not as extensive as the American display or as rich as the French, it included delicate lawns and heavy woolens, linens and brocaded poplins, "fabrics that for beauty of pattern and color were not surpassed in the court of Lyons;" and the famous English broadcloths, rivaled only by woolens from the Low Countries, Britain, still the world's exporter of textile fabrics, proved at the Centennial that, while American weavers had come far, the queen was still firmly on her throne and where she wasn't it was the efficiency of German imitations which threatened to unseat her.¹¹

The over-ornamentation popular in all phases of American life at the period is expressly manifest in the large number of trimmings shown at the fair. Belgium laces were conceded to be the finest specimens of this type, although there were some that could "only have been purchased by an Astor or a Vanderbilt," and no wonder because some of the six inch laces cost \$105 a yard.¹²

French lace produced shawls of the "finest workmanship," some of them so delicate that they seemed the creations of "fairy looms."¹³ Rare Irish laces were coveted by hosts of the ladies at Philadelphia.¹⁴ In such

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 463, 467.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

⁸ Hicks, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁹ "Characteristics of the Fair: Number 4," *loc. cit.*, p. 495.

¹⁰ Ingram, *op. cit.*, pp. 363-366.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 400, 438-440, 513.

¹² Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 512.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 467.

¹⁴ *Idem.*

company the American lace manufacturers, with their frank label of machine-made, must have looked like Cinderella before the advent of a fairy god-mother.

Artificial flowers, which the French made exquisitely, were an important article in female adornment, as were fans, ribbons, and embroideries.¹⁵ Lumped under the term *passementerie* were braids, fringe, and trimmings from Berlin and Saxony.¹⁶ A number of companies in the United States also competed in this line.

Except for hose — merino, woolen, and colored — a lady's feet at the Centennial seem strangely neglected; but her head was well attended to. Bonnets being the millinery rage of the day, the Empress of Brazil appeared at opening day ceremonies in a fashionable outfit consisting of a lavender silk dress with a train, a lace shawl, and a satin bonnet.¹⁷ As a whole, American companies emphasized their bonnets and feathers, while the French fashion houses stuck to the more dignified term "millinery."¹⁸

From her head to her toe the American woman would be adorned, decorated, and pinched, while the American male would be less beautiful but more comfortable. Fashionable gentlemen would still have their clothes tailored on Bond Street or would dress in imported English models brought in by firms like Michaelis of New York.¹⁹ The ultra-fastidious might still have their fine dress shirts "made to order only," but ready-made clothing for men was widely available for every occasion. A man could buy shirts for cricket, club, fire, baseball, yachting, and society in Philadelphia at F. Sachse & Son or at Wanamaker's large clothing emporium.²⁰ He could buy hats — dress silk, soft and stiff felt and opera — made by firms like Hutchinson's of Johnston, New York.²¹

The most uncomfortable portion of man's attire, his unrelenting high collar, he could even buy in combinations of cloth and paper designed to afford the proper stiffness. He could then decorate it with a variety of neckties. If he were working, he could purchase overalls guaranteed not to bind and inclement weather would find him protected by union suits or by waterproof clothing and shoes.²² Nevertheless, from the number of umbrellas in use, one would gather that waterproof articles were not yet in vogue.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 456.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹⁸ *Official Catalogue*, I, pp. 124, 127.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 124.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, I, p. 126.

²¹ *Idem.*

²² *Ibid.*, I, pp. 124, 125.

A search through the *Centennial Catalogue* and fashion plates of the period shows few differences between a man's clothing in 1876 and that of conservative gentlemen today. His trousers might be called "pantaloons," but they were a far cry from the knee breeches fashionable at the beginning of the century.²³ The flutings, ruffles, colored waistcoat, and frills of his ancestors had been surrendered to the opposite sex. Thus we see the Empress of Brazil at the opening ceremonies lavishly attired, while her husband contented himself with a plain suit entirely without decoration.²⁴ Military uniforms of the most gorgeous colors displayed by tradition-loving nations like Britain were probably the last vestige of western man's once gorgeous plumage.

²³ *Ibid.*, I, p. 125.

²⁴ Ingram, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

De Tocqueville Revisited

by

John K. Bettersworth

The literature of travel in the United States is legion. Perhaps it never was or will be so voluminous as it was in the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century. At that time Europeans, who were perpetually sitting on democratic volcanoes, held toward this country a consuming curiosity that was scarcely concealed by their "certain condescensions" and boorish attacks on American boorishness. Crèvecoeur, Lieber, Martineau, Grund, Mackay, Grattan, Gurowski, Charles Dickens, and Tocqueville were among the major observers to report on their travels here; but there was a host of others — so many that one of the major bibliographical feats of our day involves the mere tabulation of these travel accounts.

The travelers to America were likely to write about almost anything under the sun, including themselves. Most of them, however, offered some high-sounding first cause as justification for their travels. Almost inevitably the traveler would essay to observe American "society," by which he usually meant two peculiar American institutions; slavery, or its antithesis in the American freeman. Certainly one of the most articulate and at the same time one of the most sympathetic of these venturers on the sociological field trip was Alexis Charles Henri Clerel de Tocqueville.

An aristocrat whose family had offered up its share of heads to the guillotine, Tocqueville had served in the magistracy after the Bourbon restoration, only to suffer demotion under the Bourgeois Monarchy. During this eclipse he conceived the idea of a trip to the United States to study its advanced penal system; so, with a leave of absence from his post, he left for America in 1831, accompanied by a fellow sufferer in political misfortune, G. Beaumont. In due time there was to appear the monumental, *Du système pénitentiaire aux États-Unis et son application en France* (1833), whereby the announced purpose of the trip was fulfilled. More significant for the world of ideas, however, was Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, which first appeared in 1835, to be followed in 1840 by a second volume subtitled *The Social Influence of Democracy*.

This paper was delivered before the Mezzanine Club at Mississippi State College, November 23, 1953.

George William Pierson, the American authority on Tocqueville, has chronicled the Beaumont-Tocqueville trip, which embraced in its extensiveness Boston on the east, Green Bay on the west, Sault Ste. Marie on the north, and New Orleans on the South, an itinerary which was something better than random sampling. A study of Tocqueville's documentation also reveals that his personal observations were well buttressed with original source material. Tocqueville's attempt to "show what a democratic people really was in our day" was, therefore, remarkable free from personal prejudice. An aristocrat, he accepted the inevitability of the democratic revolution. A scholar, he also recognized that sometimes democratic ideals suffered compromise in the realm of practical politics. His primary motive was the writing of a sort of textbook on democracy for European consumption. It was, therefore, designed neither to flatter nor to offend the Americans — an approach that was indeed a welcome departure from the general run of American travel literature.

The *Democracy* soon found its way into translation and was avidly read in all parts of Europe, including Scandinavia. It was also read in America; for Americans regarded the Tocqueville treatise as on the whole favorable — as it was. It was in England, though, that the prophet was most honored, despite the fact that England fared none too well by contrast with America in Tocqueville's assizes. Perhaps this healthy willingness among the British to see themselves as others saw them made possible in the nineteenth century what Chesterton called "the revolution that did not happen." At any rate, a second generation English observer of American democracy, Lord Bryce, enthusiastically recognized the *Democracy* as a "classic."

There have been two translations of *Democracy in America* into English; one done by Henry Reeve shortly after publication, the other by Francis Bowen in 1862. The latter text served as the basis for a critical revision by Phillips Bradley in 1945. The fame of the book has been great, even in times when it was not widely read. Even after Bryce's more presumptuous study of American democracy was published in the 1890's, three separate editions of Tocqueville appeared in the United States between 1898 and 1904 — each of these running into multiple printings. Naturally, the *Democracy* has enjoyed a perennial popularity among those critics gifted with hindsight who have elevated to the realm of foresight some of Tocqueville's *diffident* conjectures about the future of democracy. Nevertheless, since the perdurability of literature is often determined by the ability of the present to read itself into the past, Tocqueville's scriptures are readily accepted in the modern canon.

Democracy in America appeared, as has been said, in two volumes, an interval of five years elapsing between the publication of the first and second parts. Volume I was largely descriptive and analytical; Volume II was a socio-philosophical study done in retrospect. Volume I was really a sort of textbook, and in it, like a good schoolmaster, Tocqueville carefully related the pertinent background developments in the evolution of American

democracy, including the Anglo-American social, economic, and political heritage. He stressed the parallels and contrasts between the American and the European experiences in democracy. Volume II was the "graduate" course — a painstaking reappraisal of the philosophical implications of the democratic revolution both for America and Europe. Bradley rightly describes this second volume as ranking "among the greatest social philosophies from Aristotle to Pareto," which "as a reasoned and objective appraisal of the democratic way of life... is unsurpassed."¹

Tocqueville began his contemplation of America with a brief delineation of the background factors of geography and racial origins. All this is but incidental to his getting to the point of his study — namely, of American society, its democracy. Out of this social democracy arose political democracy, or popular sovereignty, which to Tocqueville was the essence of the American spirit. To him the fountainhead of American democracy was the New England township; and Tocqueville noted with some chagrin that as one proceeded southward into the area where the county was the basic unit of local government, the democratic spirit waned.

Contrasting the United States with his home country, Tocqueville noted the fact that while we had a centralized government, we did not have a centralized administration. In other words, unlike France, this country was not governed down from Washington, but up from Vinegar Bend. In the United States the grassroots effectively made its influence felt everywhere. The national capital Tocqueville found to be concerned almost exclusively with national matters rather than local ones. Of course, that was over a hundred years ago.

In the American legal system, the magistrate Tocqueville found much to praise. American judges exercised not only the usual perquisites of their office customarily found in Europe, but also founded their decisions on the constitution rather than the laws; that is, they could declare a law unconstitutional. As a result, a tremendous amount of political power was exercised in America by the courts. In a country where governmental functions were hedged about with an intricate system of checks and balances these "political" courts served as "one of the most powerful barriers that have ever been devised against the tyranny of political assemblies."²

In the Federal Supreme Court, Tocqueville found the greatest judicial power ever constituted by a nation. Its members, above all other public officers had to be statesmen.

¹Phillips Bradley, ed. *Democracy in America by Alexis de Tocqueville* (New York, Knopf, 1945, I, xx).

²*Ibid.*, I, 103.

The President, who exercises a limited power, may err without causing great mischief in the state. Congress may decide amiss without destroying the Union, because the electoral body in which the Congress originates may cause it to retrace its decision by changing its members. But if the Supreme Court is ever composed of imprudent or bad men, the Union may be plunged into anarchy or civil war.³

Remembering, perhaps, the tradition of his own country, where for centuries it had been argued that the king — and therefore his functionaries — could do no wrong, Tocqueville was deeply impressed with the power of the American courts to convict public officers for wrong-doing. He also noted the fact that when public officers were impeached and tried by legislative tribunals in this country, it was not to punish the offender, but simply to deprive him of office. The actual punishment remained in the hands of the duly constituted courts, an excellent preventive for political tyranny and Star Chamber procedures.

Naturally, Tocqueville found in the American executive power a whole-some contrast to the absolutist traditions of Europe. Neither controlled by nor controlling the legislative branch, and subject to the eternal vigilance of Congress and the courts, lest he assume dictatorial powers, the American president was greatly circumscribed:

The President of the United States, it is true, is the commander-in-chief of the army, but the army is composed of only six thousand men; he commands the fleet, but the fleet reckons but few sail; he conducts the foreign relations of the Union, but the United States is a nation without neighbors. Separated from the rest of the world by the ocean, and too weak as yet to aim at the dominion of the seas, it has no enemies, and its interests rarely come into contact with those of any other nation of the globe. This proves that the practical operation of the government must not be judged by the theory of its constitution. The President of the United States possesses almost royal prerogatives, which

³ *Ibid.*, I, 152.

he has no opportunity of exercising; and the privileges which he can at present use are very circumscribed. The laws allow him to be strong. but circumstances keep him weak. ⁴

The necessity that American public servants resort to the hustings for reelection at regular intervals, Tocqueville found to be an unstabilizing factor. But, he pointed out, since the people were the real executive (the tyrannical majority, of which we shall hear more later), elections had "no very prejudicial influence on the fixity of government." ⁵ Actually, the only area where an American president might become potent was in the conduct of foreign affairs, provided his country had any. In the world of Tocqueville, since America "had no hostile neighbors to dread," the executive power could not preen itself in foreign relations.

The American federal system impressed Tocqueville as one of our greatest achievements. Federalism existed even in colonial times, for along with local self-government there was always the ubiquitous imperial tie. The subsequent creation of a national government preserved the old imperial fabric. As a result, despite its split personality, the American union could be "happy and free as a small people, and glorious and strong as a great nation." ⁶ Tocqueville did not advocate federal establishments in Europe, where a division of sovereignty into "fractional parts" might encourage the greedy to attempt aggrandizement. But, in the New World, "man has no other enemy than himself, and. . . in order to be happy and free, he has only to determine that he will be so." ⁷

Turning to political parties, Tocqueville wept over the demise of the old Federalist Party, which had provided the able leaders and the conservatism necessary to give "the new republic time to acquire a certain stability." ⁸ Obviously scandalized by the blatancy of Jacksonian Democracy and the negative ineffectuality of the Whigs, whose main concern was the destruction of Jacksonianism, Tocqueville was ready to conclude in the 1830's that the age of "great political parties" in America was over. Especially did he regret the rise of sectionalism occasioned by the tariff and national bank controversies of Jackson's time. Not principles, but material interests begot the partisanship of these latter days. In fact, said Tocqueville, the "interests" constituted "rival nations rather than parties." ⁹

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 126.

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 165.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 177.

⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 130.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 172.

⁹ *Idem.*

Although Tocqueville found the age-old conflict between aristocratic and democratic passions at the bottom of the two party system of the United States, he was cognizant of the fact that the democratic element was in the ascendancy. Men of wealth and station, said Tocqueville, bowed the knee to the untterrified democracy in public, even if they had some private reservations. If a man of wealth "meets his cobbler on the way, they stop and converse; the two citizens discuss the affairs of the state and shake hands before they part."¹⁰ Yet, the wealthy man loathed this state of things, and Tocqueville warned that if ever "the maladministration of the democracy" brought about a revolutionary crisis, and monarchism reared its ugly head in the United States, this hypocrisy would be revealed.¹¹

American parties made use of two major weapons, said Tocqueville: the press and public association. The American newspaper he found to be a highly individualistic thing. As such, it was difficult to control the entire press or any appreciable part of it. Moreover, nothing could resist its collective opinion. Tocqueville professed to be shocked at the vulgarity and coleric tendencies of the American newspaper, just as he might well be today.

The American passion for association greatly impressed Tocqueville.

If a stoppage occurs in a thoroughfare and the circulation of vehicles is hindered, the neighbors immediately form themselves into a deliberative body; and this extemporaneous assembly gives rise to an executive power which remedies the inconvenience before anybody has thought of recurring to a preexisting authority superior to that of the persons immediately concerned. If some public pleasure is concerned, an association is formed to give more splendor and regularity to the entertainment. Societies are formed to resist evils that are exclusively of a moral nature, as to diminish the vice of intemperance. In the United States associations are established to promote the public safety, commerce, industry, morality, and religion. There is no end which the human will despairs of attaining through the combined power of individuals united into a society.¹²

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 180.

¹¹ *Idem.*

¹² *Ibid.*, I, 191.

The unrestrained liberty of political association seemed to Tocqueville to be a dependable check upon the tyranny of the majority. Moreover, such freedom meant that in the United States there would be "factions, but no conspiracies." ¹³ American minorities who resorted to organization had peaceful intentions. They spent themselves and their time arguing and petitioning. Conversely, in Europe such a minority would attempt to conduct itself as if it were the majority, and instead of carrying chips on its shoulders would be inclined to tote guns.

Socially the American inclination toward association could reach amazing proportions:

As soon as several of the inhabitants of the United States have taken up an opinion or a feeling which they wish to promote in the world, they look out for mutual assistance; and as soon as they have found one another out, they combine. From that moment they are no longer isolated men, but a power seen from afar, whose actions serve for an example and whose language is listened to. The first time I heard in the United States that a hundred thousand men had bound themselves publicly to abstain from spirituous liquors, it appeared to me more like a joke than a serious engagement, and I did not at once perceive why these temperate citizens could not content themselves with drinking water by their own firesides. I at least understood that these hundred thousand Americans, alarmed by the progress of drunkenness around them, had made up their minds to patronize temperance. They acted in just the same way as a man of high rank who should dress very plainly in order to inspire the humbler orders with a contempt of luxury. It is probable that if these hundred thousand men had lived in France, each of them would singly have memorialized the government to watch the public houses all over the kingdom.¹⁴

¹³ *Ibid.*, I, 195.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 109-110.

The American institution of universal suffrage, which, by the way, was only beginning to be universal in the eighteen-thirties, Tocqueville regarded as a mixed blessing. Finding what he conceived to be a notable lack of ability in the high places of American politics, he was disposed to place the blame upon the unwisdom of "popular choice."¹⁵ The "vulgar demeanor" of the national House of Representatives disgusted him. It was, of course, directly elected by the people. On the other hand, the Senate seemed a great repository of dignity and wisdom. The voice of the people was heard only indirectly in the selection of its membership. As a result, Tocqueville concluded:

The time must come when the American republics will be obliged more frequently to introduce the plan of election by an elected body into their system of representation or run the risk of perishing miserably among the shoals of democracy.¹⁶

In this connection, it is pertinent to observe that there is today a large body of opinion in this country among political scientists, favoring the indirect choice of public officials, particularly by appointment.

Whatever their inferior qualities as statesmen, American public officials impressed Tocqueville with their simplicity of dress, modesty of bearing, and disdain for ceremony. Another characteristic of American official life that Tocqueville commended was the "entire absence of unpaid offices." Otherwise, he pointed out, "a class of rich and independent public functionaries" would develop and would doubtless "constitute the basis of an aristocracy."¹⁷

The costliness of democratic government was of considerable concern to the French aristocrat. He was somewhat disturbed by the fact that sometimes the legislator who voted taxes did not have to pay them, since often he was not a property owner. That problem should not, of course, trouble Tocqueville today. Such democratic extravagance was more to be dreaded, however, if, as often happened in a democracy, more and more people were "perpetually seeking for something better," thus causing the urge to spend to assert itself.¹⁸ In one respect Tocqueville found Americans parsimonious; namely in the policy of paying low salaries to their higher officials, a practice that still causes much concern today.

Tocqueville insisted that the government of the United States was not a cheap government -- although its low tax rate gave it a reputation for such. Then, with prophetic foresight, he wrote: "I do not fear to predict that, if the

¹⁵*Ibid.*, I, 202.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, I, 208.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, I, 205.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, I, 215.

United States is ever involved in serious difficulties, taxation will speedily be raised as in most of the aristocracies or the monarchies of Europe.¹⁹ In fact, financially or otherwise, Tocqueville felt that democracy was "better adapted for the conduct of society in times of peace, or for a sudden effort of remarkable vigor, than for the prolonged endurance of the great storms that beset the political existence of nations."²⁰

One of the saving graces of the American democracy, according to Tocqueville, was what might be called its enlightened self-interest, "The citizen looks upon the fortunes of the public as his own, and he labors for the good of the state, not merely from a sense of pride or duty, but from what I venture to term cupidity."²¹ In other words, in America, the love of country amounted to the love of self. One aspect of this tendency Tocqueville found overdone. To him the American was always a bit intemperate in defending his country from censure. It was, suggested the Frenchman, not only his country that was then attacked, it was himself.²² This "irritable patriotism" denied to foreigners the right to criticize anything in America.

America is therefore a free country in which, lest anybody should be hurt by your remarks, you are not allowed to speak freely of private individuals or of the state, of the citizens or of the authorities, of public or of private undertakings, or, in short, of anything at all except, perhaps, the climate and the soil; and even then Americans will be found ready to defend both as if they had cooperated in producing them.²³

One mitigating circumstance that Tocqueville could mustered in defense of Americans was that personally they were usually hard to offend:

I have often noticed in the United States that it is not easy to make a man understand that his presence may be dispensed with; hints will not always suffice to shake him off. I contradict an American at every word he says, to show him that his conversation bores me; he instantly labors

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 225.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 228.

²¹ *Ibid.*, I, 243.

²² *Ibid.*, I, 244.

²³ *Idem.*

with fresh pertinacity to convince me; I preserve a dogged silence, and he thinks I am meditating deeply on the truths that he is uttering; at last I rush from his company, and he supposes that some urgent business hurries me elsewhere. This man will never understand that he wearies me to death unless I tell him so, and the only way to get rid of him is to make him my enemy for life.²⁴

One feature of American democracy impressed Tocqueville deeply: namely a "high notion of political rights," even among the lowest classes. Thus, Americans refrained "from attacking the rights of others in order that their own may not be violated."²⁵ We Americans, who have in recent years been somewhat constantly chided for our lawbreaking proclivities, will be surprised to learn that Tocqueville regarded us as a rather law-abiding lot. To him the American, even if opposed to a certain law, regarded it as "a contract to which he is himself a party." Moreover, some fine day one could get the law changed, if he could muster a majority. So, a law was observed, "first, because it is a self-imposed evil [the will of the majority] and, secondly, it is an evil of transient duration."²⁶

As an active participant in government, the American possessed a consuming love of politics:

It is difficult to say what place is taken up in life of an inhabitant of the United States by his concern for politics. To take a hand in the regulation of society and to discuss it is his biggest concern and, so to speak, the only pleasure an American knows. This feeling pervades the most trifling habits of life; even the women frequently attend public meetings and listen to political harangues as a recreation from their household labors. Debating clubs are, to a certain extent, a substitute for theatrical entertainments: an American cannot converse, but he can discuss, and his talk falls into a dissertation. He speaks to you as if he were addressing a meeting; and if he should chance to become warm in the discussion, he will say, "Gentlemen" to the person with whom he is conversing.²⁷

²⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 172.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 250.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 245.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 250.

If, said Tocqueville, an American were condemned to being concerned solely with his own private affairs, he "would be robbed of half his existence."²⁸ And this habit of meddling in the business of government, felt Tocqueville, would be well-nigh impossible for a conqueror to destroy. Even the perpetual pestering of an official by his constituents was valuable, for willy-nilly it kept him enlightened on the affairs of state.

Democratic government could not be, said Tocqueville, as skilful in accomplishing its work as "an adroit despotism;" but, "if it does fewer things well, it does a greater number of things:"

Democracy does not give the people the most skillfull government, but it produces what the ablest governments are frequently unable to create: namely, an all-pervading and restless activity, a superabundant force, and an energy which is inseparable from it and which may, however unfavorable circumstances may be, produce wonders. These are the true advantages of democracy. ²⁹

Tocqueville ultimately got down to the meat of the democratic matter — the rule of the majority, or, as it might easily become, the tyranny of the majority. He was disturbed by the fact that once the majority had spoken, all discussion tended to cease, or was expected to. "I know of no country," he wrote, "in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America."³⁰ The holder of the unconventional opinion almost became an outlaw in the eyes of society. Even the despotic court of Louis XIV harbored such merciless critics as LaBruyère and Molière, who often figuratively spat in the face of king and courtier. Not so in the America that Tocqueville saw, for freedom of opinion he deemed non-existent with us. To this fact he attributed our lack of a literary genius. This despotism of the majority caused a democracy to develop among its people a habit of hypocritical conformity. Everyone had to curry favor with King Mob.

It is true that American courtiers do not say "Sire," or "Your Majesty," a distinction without a difference. They are forever talking of the natural intelligence of the people whom they serve; they do not debate the question which of the virtues of their master is pre-eminently worthy of

²⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 250.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 252.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 263.

admiration, for they assure him that he possesses all the virtues without having acquired them, or without caring to acquire them; they do not give him their daughters and their wives to be raised at his pleasure to the rank of his concubines; but by sacrificing their opinions they prostitute themselves. ³¹

Yet, said Tocqueville, all was not lost; for the democratic majority was "still destitute of the most perfect instruments of tyranny." For example, the tyranny of the central government never extended to "the secondary affairs of society." ³² By these, Tocqueville meant the township, the town, and the county, which served "as concealed breakwaters" to "check or part the tide of popular determination." ³³ In other words, Tocqueville depended upon American localism to thwart an evil majority. Here he would find agreement with the proponents of state rights in America, who have long resisted federal encroachment in local affairs.

Significantly enough, Tocqueville pointed out that if ever the majority rule of the United States were introduced into a country that had a tradition of centralized administration, "I do not hesitate to assert that in such a republic a more insufferable despotism would prevail than in any that could be found on this side of Asia." ³⁴ Latin American republics please note.

Tocqueville, with becoming modesty, felt that the saving grace of American democracy was its legal profession, which served as a counterpoise to the tyranny of the majority. The American bench, with its relish for the law of precedents, exhibited a "taste and a reverence for what is old" that gladdened the heart of a French liberal aristocrat. ³⁵ The only enlightened class that the people did not mistrust, the American lawyers, turned up everywhere — not just on the bench or at the bar, but in legislative bodies and in executive positions. They were, in short, the American *noblesse*.

Would the American republic survive? Tocqueville thought so; thanks to (1) its "peculiar and accidental" location, which promoted national prosperity and discouraged foreign invasion; (2) its laws, which could change as the need arose; and (3) the "manners and customs of the people." ³⁶ As for the "manners and customs," Tocqueville observed: "In Europe we are wont to look upon a restless disposition, an unbounded desire for riches, and an excessive love of independence as propensities very dangerous to society. Yet these are the very elements that ensure a long and peaceful future to the republics of America." ³⁷

³¹ *Ibid.*, I, 267.

³² *Ibid.*, I, 271.

³³ *Ibid.*, I, 272.

³⁴ *Idem.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 276.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 288.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 296.

Elaborating upon the legal aspect of our institutions, Tocqueville thought that American democracy could last indefinitely because of (1) its federal system, which combined "the power of a great republic with the security of a small one;" (2) its township institutions, which curtailed the tyranny of the majority and gave the people constant experience in self-government; and (3) the courts, with their stabilizing conservatism.³⁸

Regarding the federal system, Tocqueville thought centralized powers to be on a decline in America. Such was actually the case in the days of Andrew Jackson, whom Tocqueville stoutly defended from charges of dictatorship. Jackson was just a good politician — "a Federalist by taste and a Republican by calculation."³⁹ His party was the party of particularism during the era of Southern hegemony in national politics. It was Civil War Republicanism that initiated a return to federalism, a trend which has been accelerated by each national crisis since that time.

Where does religion fit into the democratic picture? A Catholic of somewhat uncertain convictions, Tocqueville found his own church had adapted itself enthusiastically to American institutions. In fact, American Catholics were "the most democratic and most republican class."⁴⁰ With refreshing candor, Tocqueville observed the American melting pot, with its working class leaven of Catholic Irish, and concluded that the social position "as well as their limited number" of American Catholics, obliged them "to adopt these opinions."⁴¹

Regardless of denomination, Tocqueville found American Christianity possessed of a common moral law. In fact, American religion was less a "doctrine of revelation" than "a commonly received opinion."⁴² Tocqueville also observed a commendable aloofness on the part of the American clergy in matters of politics.

Tocqueville's penetrating observations of American public worship deserve quoting:

It may fairly be believed that a certain number of Americans pursue a peculiar form of worship from habit more than from conviction. In the United States the sovereign authority is religious, and consequently hypocrisy must be common; but there is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in

³⁸*Ibid.*, I, 299.

³⁹*Ibid.*, I, 414.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, I, 300.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, I, 301.

⁴²*Ibid.*, II, 11.

America; and there can be no greater proof of its utility and of its conformity to human nature than that its influence is powerfully felt over the most enlightened and free nation of the earth.⁴³

While American religion took no direct part in the government of society, Tocqueville concluded that it was the first of our political institutions, for it exercised a proper restraint upon all the rest. It was to Americans "indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions."⁴⁴ Even if it did not save men in another world, Tocqueville observed, it was conducive to their happiness and greatness in this.⁴⁵ Observing how interwoven were the motives of saving souls and ministering to the material urge for a better life in the American conquest of the wilderness, Tocqueville was moved to remark that European cynics who thought religion the "thing most amiss in America," had never seen "a religious and a free nation."⁴⁶ Despotism, he observed, might govern without faith; liberty could not. Church and state had to be separated; religion and democracy should not. In Europe religion came under attack only because its devotees became political rather than religious adversaries, or because clergymen served not as representatives of Deity but as allies of government.

Tocqueville the sociologist exhibited a lively concern as to the future of the "three races" in the United States: the white man, the Negro, and the Indian. Tocqueville found the Negro demoralized by the degradation of slavery, the Indian by his delusions of grandeur. Obviously, Tocqueville had been thoroughly imbued with the legend of the noble savage. He was also impressed with what he regarded as essentially a benevolent treatment of the Indian by the American. After all, the American had annihilated the Indian legally, "without violating a single principle of morality in the eyes of the world. It is impossible to destroy men with more respect for the laws of nature." Here was Tocqueville the judge speaking, of course. As for American treatment of the Indians, we must remember that the axiom that the only good Indian was a dead Indian was invented by the War Department a third of a century later.

Regarding the Negro, Tocqueville saw a turbulent future. He considered amalgamation as well-nigh impossible. Abolish slavery and whichever race gained the ascendancy would destroy the other. Unless, of course, slavery had destroyed both master and slave beforehand — for Tocqueville was aware of the inefficiency and economic folly of slavery long before Hinton Rowan Helper sounded the tocsin. Actually, Tocqueville concluded that

⁴³*Ibid.*, I, 303.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, I, 305-306.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, II, 21.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, I, 307.

eventually were slavery abolished, the Negroes would take over in the South, thanks to their numerical superiority. The ultimate fate of the Southern white he conceived as similar to that of the Moors in Spain. Accordingly, he felt that the South would cling to slavery "as long as possible."⁴⁷ But an enlightened age would eventually outlaw slavery in this its last stronghold, and "great calamities may be expected to ensue." If liberty be refused to the Negroes of the South, he said, "they will in the end forcibly seize it for themselves; if it be given, they will before long abuse it."⁴⁸

Even were racial animosities not to plague the South, its future was dismal. Taking cognizance of the economic disparity between North and South, Tocqueville observed that in America the industrial urge was uppermost, that in this respect the South was exceedingly backward, and that in the end the North would predominate. In fact, he said, "the civilization of the North appears to be the common standard, to which the whole nation will one day be assimilated." Herein Tocqueville was indeed a prophet, at least as until recently. Of course, he would not have dreamed there would be a Hollywood. At any rate, Tocqueville could see that the industrialized Americans would, like the English, become the "commercial agents of a great portion of the world."⁴⁹ Of this great New World democracy, he prophesied:

The time will therefore come when one hundred and fifty million men will be living in North America, equal in condition, all belonging to one family, owing their origin to the same cause, and preserving the same civilization, the same language, the same religion, the same habits, the same manners, and imbued with the same opinions, propagated under the same forms. The rest is uncertain, but this is certain; and it is a fact new to the world, a fact that the imagination strives in vain to grasp.⁵⁰

Where did all of this leave the European? What moral did it point for Europe to adorn Tocqueville's democratic tale? While he purposely sought to demonstrate the workings of American democracy to the peoples of Europe, he was careful to give warning that he was not proposing "the laws and customs of the Anglo-Americans for the imitation of all democratic communities. Simply by adopting the form of American democracy, no nations might achieve the spirit of it." Liberty could not, he asserted, "exist all over

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, I, 379.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, I, 422.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, I, 381.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, I, 434.

the world under the same features." ⁵¹ Nevertheless, for France Tocqueville aptly observed that "if the peaceable dominion of the majority is not founded among us in time, we shall sooner or later fall under the unlimited authority of a single man." ⁵² This was written nearly two decades before Napoleon III revived the empire. The trouble with France, Tocqueville observed, was that while Americans had always directed their public affairs themselves, the French had sat around speculating on "the best manner of conducting them." ⁵³

It was in his sequel volume that Tocqueville chose to settle back and point the morals. Purporting to elaborate upon the "social influence of democracy" in America, in contrast to a supposed concern with the "political influence" of that democracy in the previous volume, Tocqueville simply proved that the two subjects were inseparable. There was much society in the first volume, and there was politics in the second. The organization of the second volume was more logical; its divisions tended to follow the essay form rather than the rambling lecture technique of Volume I. As such, it was better writing but harder reading. It also lacked somewhat of the freshness of recent observation, after the lapse of five years. As the focus was adjusted for distance, the sharpness of detail was lost. Or perhaps it would be more apt to say that at the later date Tocqueville was seeing America through the mind rather than through the eye.

Volume II essays to treat of the "social influence" of American democracy, first on the action of the intellect, then upon the feelings and manners. The book concludes with a study of the influence of democratic ideas and feelings on political society. While there is a considerable amount of rehashing of ideas advanced in the first volume, Tocqueville was too resourceful a writer ever simply to repeat himself. Here we shall concern ourselves only with several matters upon which Tocqueville did not comment in his first volume.

Tocqueville begins his second volume with the flat assertion that the philosophical method of the Americans is that they haven't any. Paying almost no attention to philosophy, Americans are blatantly pragmatic. Americans study Descartes least, says Tocqueville, and apply him best. Their standard of judgment is "themselves alone," and what they cannot understand they deny. To paraphrase: We do not comprehend; therefore, it is not.

In science, Tocqueville finds Americans more practical than theoretical, which is no news to anybody. It is all part of the levelling influence and the American urge for convenience. Out of these practical dreams the American occasionally does something extraordinary. Prodigious undertakings are

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, I, 330.

⁵² *Idem.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, II, 18.

not infrequent in America — the bigger and better idea, so to speak:

The Americans have traced out the circuit of an immense city on the site which they intend to make their capital, but which up to the present time is hardly more densely peopled than Pontoise, though, according to them, it will one day contain a million inhabitants. They have already rooted up trees for ten miles around lest they should interfere with the future citizens of this imaginary metropolis. They have erected a magnificent palace for Congress in the center of the city and have given it the pompous name of the Capitol.⁵⁴

Another concern of Tocqueville in his second volume was the nature of the fine arts and literature in America. He observed that in the transition from aristocratic patronage to an economy of the market place, where the patron was everyman, the fine arts lost something of their fineness, but they gained an audience.

To Tocqueville there was no American literature. Yet, Americans read prodigiously. "There is hardly a pioneer's hut that does not contain a few odd volumes of Shakespeare," he wrote.⁵⁵ In fact, Tocqueville read "Henry V" for the first time in a log cabin! As for literary production, Tocqueville found journalism America's most fertile field (and no pun is intended here); for with true democratic spirit the newspaperman threw literary conventions to the winds.

Some day, though, there would be an American literature:

Style will frequently be fantastic, incorrect, overburdened, and loose, almost always vehement and bold. Authors will aim at rapidity of execution more than at perfection of detail. Small productions will be more wit than erudition, more imagination than profundity; and literary performances will bear marks of an untutored and rude vigor of thought, frequently of great variety and singular fecundity. To object of authors will be to astonish rather than to please, and to stir the passions more than to charm the taste.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 53.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 55.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 59.

If ever Tocqueville's claim to prophetic stature would seem justified, it is here. Could Tocqueville have unconsciously discovered in robust American journalism a literary voice crying in the wilderness?

In a chapter on poetry, Tocqueville pointed out that democracies tended to dry up the springs of poesy, particularly that type which revelled in the dead days of yore. After the gods and heroes had suffered the democratic *dämmerung*, what was there left to be poetic about? Tocqueville had the answer. The subject of democratic epic would be "man alone." Democratic poets would look at man and find God:

Nothing conceivable is so petty, so insipid, so crowded with paltry interests — in one word, so anti-poetic — as the life of a man in the United States. But among the thoughts which it suggests, there is always one that is full of poetry, and this is the hidden nerve which gives vigor to the whole frame. ⁵⁷

Tocqueville's observations concerning the American woman, although they were reserved for his second volume, reveal an understanding not only of her accomplishments but also of her potentialities. To the Frenchman it was amazing that the American girl was allowed to go her own way. This was, of course, before we imported the French institution of chaperonage. At no age did the young American woman display "childish timidity or ignorance." ⁵⁸ She early learned the facts of life, if we may accept Tocqueville's word. If she did not "abandon herself to evil," at least she knew it existed; and she was "remarkable rather for the purity of her manners than for chastity of mind." ⁵⁹ All of which would move one to ask Dr. Kinsey if he has read any books by Tocqueville lately?

All this freedom ended, however, with marriage, which circumscribed the American woman "within the narrow circle of domestic interests and duties" and forbade her "to step beyond it." ⁶⁰ Ultimately, though, Tocqueville saw improvement in the status of women in America, even to the point where they might become the equals of men; for, as he enthusiastically remarked, it was the superiority of the American woman that above all else accounted for the "singular prosperity and growing strength of that people." ⁶¹

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 74.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 198.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 199.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 201.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, II, 214.

Regarding America, Tocqueville may be considered a prophet, and with honor, since this is not his own country. Certainly as an observer gifted with greater perspicacity than the average person, he could not fail to observe some of the inevitabilities of the future. In these days when newstands abound in paperback Nostradamuses and astrological journals, and every syndicated columnist is a prognosticator, a considerable percentage of error has become allowable. Tocqueville's score was surprisingly good.

One example, by way of conclusion, will suffice. Tocqueville observed just one hundred and twenty years ago that two nations 'portentous for the future had grown up "unnoticed," to enter suddenly into the "front rank" of nations. They were the United States and Russia. All others, said Tocqueville, had already reached their maximum development, while these two were proceeding "with ease and celerity" toward an unbounded future:

The American struggles against the obstacles that nature opposes to him; the adversaries of the Russian are men. The former combats the wilderness and savage life; the latter, civilization with all its arms. The conquests of the American are therefore gained by the plowshare; those of the Russian by the sword. The Anglo-American relies upon personal interest to accomplish his ends and gives free scope to the unguided strength and common sense of the people; the Russian centers all the authority of society in a single arm. The principal instrument of the former is freedom; of the latter, servitude. Their starting-point is different and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe. ⁶²

⁶² *Ibid.*, I, 434.

Publications Received

[Note: The following publications have been issued on the campus or in the state and have been received by the *Quarterly* since its last issue.]

Bryan, Gordon K., *County Revenues and Expenditures in Mississippi, 1952*, State College, Social Science Research Center, Social Science Studies, Government Series, No. 10, April, 1954, 56 pp.

Buchanan, William, and Fanelli, Alex, *Recreation in Louisville*, State College, Mississippi, Social Science Research Center, Social Science Studies, Community Series, No. 3, May, 1954, 25 pp.

Dickins, Dorothy, *The Home-Produced Food Supply of Non-Owner Farm Families: Some Factors Associated With It*, State College, Mississippi, Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 512, March, 1954, 24 pp.

Evans, W. J., and Bettersworth, John K., *You and Your Vote*, Citizen's Handbook, No. 1, State College, Social Science Research Center, May, 1954, 39 pp.

Fanelli, Alex, and Buchanan, William, *Louisville Surveys Its Needs*, State College, Social Science Research, Social Science Studies, Community Series, No. 2, April, 1954, 21 pp.

Fanelli, A. A., and Payne, Raymond, *A Study of Organized Communities in Mississippi*, State College, Social Science Research Center, Social Science Studies, Community Series, No. 1, June, 1953, 79 pp.

Harold F. Kaufman and Others, *Toward a Delineation of Community Research in the South*, State College, Social Science Research Center, Social Science Studies, Community Series, No. 4, May, 1954, 56 pp.

Mississippi Children's Code Commission, *Children at Home*, ed. by Bertha R. Grant, Jackson, 1954, 8 pp.

Detention of Children Prior to Court Hearing, ed. by Bertha R. Grant, Jackson, 1954, 19 pp.

Program Planning for the Day Care Center, ed. by Bertha R. Grant, Jackson, 1954, 10 pp.

Student's Rating of Major Problems Confronting Youth, ed. by Bertha R. Grant, Jackson, 1954, 11 pp.

Pedersen, Harald A., and Raper, Arthur F., *The Cotton Plantation in Transition*, State College, Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 508, January, 1954, 26 pp.

Pedersen, Harald A., *Selectivity in Rural-Urban Migration*, State College, Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station, Circular 190, December, 1953, 8 pp.

Rice, Margaret E., and Powell, Catherine, *Life Tables For Mississippi, 1930, 1940, 1950, Abridged*, State College, Social Science Research Center, Social Science Studies, Demographic Series, No. 1, May, 1954, 34 pp.

News and Notes

HOMEMAKING COURSES FOR SUMMER. Special three-weeks courses in homemaking education are being offered at Mississippi State College this summer, according to Professor Esther F. Segner, head of the homemaking education department. The dates for these courses are May 31 to June 18, June 21 to July 9, and July 12 to July 30. These short courses are in addition to the regular courses to be offered during the two six-weeks terms of the Summer School, June 2 to July 9, and July 12 to August 13. Miss Emma Shepek of Columbus, associate professor of home economics at MSC.W., and Mrs. Elinor Hogg of Stoneville, formerly associate professor of nursery education at LSU, is assisting Miss Segner in teaching these classes. From May 31 to June 18, a course in family meals and nutrition was taught by Miss Shepek, and a course in organization of programs of work in home economics by Miss Segner. From June 21 to July 9 Mrs. Hogg taught a course in child study, and Miss Segner, one in special problems and thesis research for advanced students. From July 12 to July 30 Miss Segner, assisted by Dr. O. L. Snowden of the agricultural education department, is teaching a course in adult homemaking education. This course is intended especially for vocational homemaking teachers on extended programs.

ELLIS TO EMORY. Irby C. Ellis, graduate teaching assistant in history at Mississippi State College, has been awarded a doctoral fellowship of \$1500 at Emory University. Ellis, a native of Clarksdale, has lived for the past seven years in Columbus. Ellis graduated from Clarksdale High School in 1937. He was connected with the sheriff's office in Coahoma County when he was called to military service in 1941. While with the army he saw service in the Philippine Islands. In 1949 Ellis enrolled at Mississippi State College, majoring in social studies. He was recalled to service in 1950 and was sent to Germany, where he remained for a year. When he returned to civilian life, he re-entered Mississippi State College, receiving his B. S. degree in August, 1953. In the Fall of that year Ellis entered the Graduate School at Mississippi State College and was given a teaching assistantship in the history department. He is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Alpha Theta, national scholastic honorary fraternities. Ellis will complete his M. S. degree at Mississippi State during the Summer and will begin his doctoral work at Emory in September.

LIBRARY NAMED FOR MITCHELL. The Fred T. Mitchell Library was officially made the name of the Mississippi State College library on May 19. The program began at 11 a. m. in the Lee Hall auditorium. Dr. Drennon introduced Dr. H. M. Ivy of Meridian, president of the Board of Trustees, who conducted the dedicatory ceremony. President Ben Hilbun responded for the college. Donald E. Thompson, director of libraries, introduced Dr. A. F. Kuhlman of Nashville, the principal speaker of the occasion. Dr. Kuhlman, who is director of the Joint Libraries of Vanderbilt, George Peabody, and Scarritt Colleges, served as consultant on the building of the library here. His address appears in this issue of the *Quarterly*. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, Dr. Glover Moore made an announcement on behalf of Friends

of the Library, an organization which he recently helped to establish here. After lunch, Miss Margarete Peebles of the library staff arranged tours of the library for the visitors to the campus.

FAMILY RELATIONS INSTITUTE. The annual meeting of the Mississippi Council on Family Relations was held at Millsaps College in Jackson May 7 and 8. Rev. H. E. Finger, Jr., president of Millsaps College, welcomed the group, and Dr. William Paul Carter, professor of sociology and rural life at Mississippi State College and president of the council, responded to the welcome. After a brief business meeting, Rev. J. D. Humphrey of Grenada led a discussion on what the churches are doing to improve family living. Earnest Price, Jr., YMCA general secretary at Mississippi State College, was a member of the panel for this discussion. Friday afternoon Mrs. Vera Barnett of the University of Mississippi presided during a panel discussion of what the colleges are doing to improve family living. Miss Mary Walker Mahon of the State Department of Public Welfare led a discussion of the services which community agencies perform for the family. Professor V. S. Mann, of the guidance education department at Mississippi State College, participated in this discussion. At the Friday night session, Stanley Fowler of the home economics department at Mississippi Southern spoke on "Breaking Up Our Fallow Ground." After another business meeting Saturday morning, Mrs. Dorris Hinton of Central High School in Jackson presided during a discussion of the public schools' contribution to better family living. Miss Esther F. Segner, of the homemaking education department at Mississippi State College, participated in this discussion.

KERN TO CASE SUMMER INSTITUTE. Edward E. Kern, Jr., assistant professor of agricultural economics at Mississippi State College, has been awarded a fellowship at the Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland, Ohio. There he will be one of 50 social science professors who will have their expenses paid this summer while they study and observe economics in action. They will study important current economic problems as presented and analyzed by six outstanding economists. The group will make field trips to company plants, followed by discussions with top company executives. They will study ways to improve the teaching of economics and social sciences through the use of new instructional aids and techniques. Another objective of the program is to furnish a clearer understanding of the economic functions being performed daily in business operations. The course begins June 20, and ends July 30. This will be the third such summer program. The funds that make this program possible are contributed to the Case Institute of Technology by Republic Steel Corporation, and the plants and other facilities of that corporation will be among those available for visitations and other practical benefits. Mr. Kern joined the staff of the agricultural economics department here in 1950. He received his B.S. and his M.S. from LSU, and he has done a year of graduate work at the University of Kentucky.

CAMPAIGN STUDY PUBLISHED. James H. McLendon, associate professor of history at Mississippi State College, is a contributor to a five-volume study, "Presidential Nominating Politics in 1952," which was being published in May by the Johns Hopkins Press. Dr. McLendon's contribution

is a detailed analysis of the Democratic campaign in Mississippi. The entire study was conducted under the auspices of the American Political Science Association. Also contributing to the study was Professor Leon A. Wilber of Mississippi Southern, who covered the Republican phase. Since the activities of the State Democratic Convention and the Mississippi delegation at Chicago were quite interesting in relation to contested delegations, Dr. McLendon's and Professor Wilber's study is of nation-wide as well as state significance. A set of this five-volume study was presented to Governor Hugh L. White in Jackson on the official date of publication, May 10. On the same date in Washington, President Eisenhower was also given a presentation set of the study.

TRAMEL RECEIVES DOCTORATE. Mr. Tramel, assistant professor of agricultural economics, received his Ph.D. from Iowa State College on June 11. His thesis is based on a study of the factors in the response made by corn to fertilizers. It is based on experimentation that has been in progress at the Delta Branch Experiment Station at Stoneville since 1921. Dr. Tramel is a graduate of Raleigh High School. During World War II he served five years in the Army, over three years of this time in Africa, the Mediterranean area, and Europe. He received his B.S. from State in 1947, and his M.S. in 1950. He taught veterans in Raleigh for two years before he returned to State as an instructor. Last year, with the assistance of a General Education Board fellowship, he studied at Iowa State.

PEDERSEN RECEIVED FULBRIGHT. Harald A. Pedersen, State College population expert, has been awarded a Fulbright research grant to study in Denmark for nine months beginning in September. The award provides for research with the Royal College of Agriculture and Veterinary Science at Copenhagen. Dr. Pedersen hopes to study the system of farm retirement in Denmark and the Danish social security plan for agricultural workers. This would be a continuation of a study of retirement practices of Danish immigrant farmers and their descendants in the United States, which Dr. Pedersen began while a member of the research staff at the University of Wisconsin. The son of Danish immigrants to this country, he is familiar with the culture of Denmark as well as the patterns of rural life in several sections of the United States. Dr. Pedersen came to Mississippi State College in 1948 after serving as rural sociologist on the staff of the Southwestern Land Tenure Research Committee at Fayetteville, Arkansas. As associate professor of sociology and rural life, he has conducted studies of the farm labor force, migration and urbanization in Mississippi, and mechanization of the farm economy of the Delta. A graduate of New Mexico A. & M., he holds a master's degree from LSU and a doctor's degree from the University of Wisconsin. He plans to return to Mississippi State on the expiration of his research grant in the summer of 1955.

KAUFMAN AT WISCONSIN. Harold F. Kaufman, Thomas L. Bailey professor and head of the department of sociology and rural life, is teaching in the summer session at the University of Wisconsin as a visiting lecturer in sociology. Dr. Kaufman came to Mississippi State College in 1948. Since that time he has on invitation assumed short teaching assignments and lecture-ships at Columbia University, Emory University, and Garrett Biblical Institute of Northwestern University.

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